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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER

1921

Cover Design, painted by Haskell Coffin Art Section, Beautiful Women



HAL G. EVARTS

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The first installment of this captivating story of the West will appear in the next, the October, issue. Be sure to read it.

- The Best Serial Novels of the Year**
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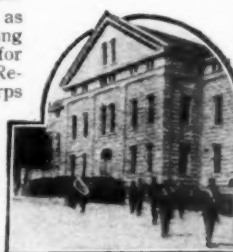
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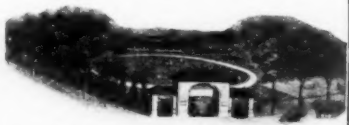
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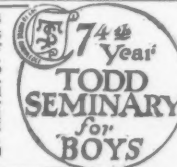
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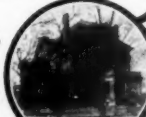
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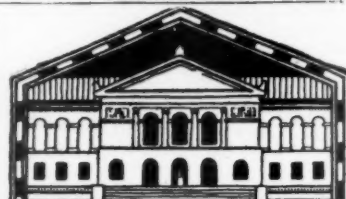
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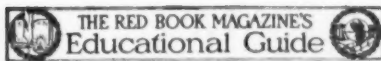
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This year many young people will again be perplexed by the problem of finding the right school. Why not let us help you?

The Chicago Daily News maintains this service absolutely free of charge to you. No need to hurriedly select a school on mere hearsay when expert advice can be obtained by telephoning, writing, or calling for a personal interview at

THE CHICAGO DAILY NEWS
School and College Bureau
CHICAGO ILLINOIS



What Would You Have Done?

MY husband was manager of one of the branch mills of a world-wide corporation and everybody said it was a wonderful position for so young a man. There was one great drawback, however—we had to live in a small mill-town which offered none of the advantages that we had both been used to. For most things we did not mind because we knew our next advancement would move us to a large city and for that we could wait.

One thing only could not wait—the education of our boy of 7 and our girl of 6. We knew the foundation they were now laying, the associations they were now making, the habits they were now forming, the teaching they were now getting would not wait and could never be made up for later—but what could we do? What would you have done?

It was with many misgivings, therefore, that I started Jim at the only local school accessible. I knew his teacher-to-be; one of the town girls, only a child herself, a product of the same school with only the commonest kind of a common school education and with little or no training or experience; and to think it was to such a person that I was going to turn over my boy to be educated!

It seemed like a joke, but as the year wore on it became more and more a serious one and the joke was on us. Jim was apparently learning nothing except bad language and behavior which was growing worse every day, and I dreaded to think of sending our little girl into those same surroundings. His father tried to make the best of it by saying, "Oh, he's got to learn to rub up against all kinds and he'll come out all right," but I could see he was really as much worried as I.

One day Jim, Sr., returned from a trip to the Home Office in New York and as soon as he stepped inside the house I knew something had happened. He was to be transferred—I felt it.

"Mary," he shouted from the bottom of the steps. "Come here quickly, I've got it!"

"Got what?" I cried as I hurried down.

"Are we going to move to New York?"

"Oh, no," he laughed—"nothing like that just yet—but something better—as far as the children are concerned. See this and this and this." He pulled some papers from his pocket and rapidly turned the pages.

"On the train," he explained breathlessly, "I met a man, bragging about his children—you know—the proud father kind—showed me their pictures—their school reports and all that, but what interested me most of all was a letter from his 7-year-old son—7 years old, mind you—Jim is 7 and think what sort of a letter he writes!—well I had to admit the man had an infant prodigy—which, however, he vehemently denied—just an every-day normal child—he maintained—but—and this is the amazing thing—the boy had been taught by correspondence through his mother—by correspondence! Do you get that?"

"He was so enthusiastic about it I thought he must be a little crazy, but at

any rate, to make a long story short, he got me so excited that I actually stopped off at Baltimore, where this school is located, to see for myself, for I was naturally still skeptical.

"I found there a great private day school—a Super-School, it has been called—that specializes in the education of young children. I had explained to me that its Trustees, public-spirited citizens who maintain the school in the cause of education without any financial benefit, either direct or indirect, had obtained such remarkable results with their day pupils that they had decided to extend its usefulness so that pupils, no matter where located, could share in its advantages and privileges."

I threw my arms around Jim's neck, thrilled by his enthusiasm. "Let's order the course at once," I said.

"It's ordered already!" he replied—"I couldn't wait. There's the outfit in my luggage!"

THAT was 5 years ago. Jim's promotion to the big city has at last come and we are now able to put both children in school, and what do you suppose the Principal said when I went to enter Jim? "What year of Calvert did you say he had finished?"

"The 6th," I answered.

"And has always had good reports?"

"Yes," I could truthfully answer.

"Well, then he can enter our high school department." And he did—and what is more, he is leading his class!

The little girl did the same in her school, and although both children have spent their whole lives in a little mill-town, they have—thanks to the Calvert School, to whom they owe their entire education—a broader knowledge and culture than most of their metropolitan friends with all their advantages of libraries, museums, art galleries, etc., so that they at once took their place as leaders both in and out of school and have made just the friends we would wish.

Indeed, through our contact with the children's work we also have had what has been practically a post-graduate course ourselves, and though it has taken but little of our time it has brought new and delightful interests into our life also. It was a revelation to me what Calvert School was able to do for my children. Their progress has been phenomenal and I would never have believed it possible.

If there is no school or only a poor one near you, let Calvert School come to you with its unique methods and unusual advantages to give your child an exceptional education from Kindergarten to High School right in your own home. The School will gladly send you full information on request or you may simply fill out and send the coupon below if you wish.

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Mrs. George Guiterman, 8 days later
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Without Drugs, Medicines, Exercise, Starvation, Baths or Massages

"HURRAH! I have lost 13 pounds since last Monday (8 days) and am feeling fine," writes Mrs. George Guiterman, of 420 East 66th St., New York City, whose photographs are shown above. "I used to lie in bed an hour or so before I could get to sleep but I go to sleep now as soon as I lie down and I can sleep from 8 to 9 hours. Before I began losing weight I could not take much exercise but now I can walk four or five miles a day. I feel better than I have for months."

Best of all, Mrs. Guiterman can continue to reduce her weight, rapidly or slowly, just as she pleases. When she reaches the exact weight she desires she can retain it—no increase, no further reduction. This is all under her own control.

Gains Health, Vigor and Appearance Also

Study again the two photographs taken only 8 days apart. They are exactly as taken by the camera—no alteration—no re-touching. Even in this short period, folds and facial lines have vanished. Notice particularly the improvement in the eyes. The heaviness and listlessness which, sooner or later, appears in the eyes of stout people have gone. In their place is a brightness which shows that the years have disappeared with the flesh. You see in the eyes the most convincing evidence of the additional benefits which come when unhealthy, dangerous fat is removed by the proper methods. Increased health and vigor; deep restful slumber; soothed nerves; all these are the result of this wonderful new method which, because it follows Nature's own law, brings youthful spirits and energy as well as youthful form.

Results in 48 Hours

Even in so short a time as 48 hours there is a considerable reduction of weight, a clearing of the skin, a brighter eye and a firmer step which shows you that at last you have found the one safe, easy, natural way to regain youthful form and vigor. Yet you make no change in your daily routine. You continue to eat the food you like. In fact you will be able to eat many dishes which you have denied yourself in the past—for you will be shown how to avoid their fattening qualities. All you have to do is to follow one of Nature's simple laws—in return Nature gives all and exacts nothing. You can regulate your rate of reduction—can reach your normal weight on a date set by yourself. Then you can retain that ideal weight—no further gain or loss. Men who were so stout that even walking was a torture—women who had been forced to deny themselves fluffy, colorful, stylish clothes, marvel at their quick return to normal weight and the health, energy and vitality secured also.

Read What Others Say

Takes off 20 Pounds

"Eugene Christian's Course has done for me just what it said it would. I reduced twenty pounds. . . I will need to reduce some more, and with the directions of the course I can do that as fast or as slow as I desire. Many thanks for your interest and the course."
Mr. ——— Detroit, Mich.

Now 40 Pounds Lighter

"It is with great pleasure that I am able to assure you that the course on Weight Control proved absolutely satisfactory."
Mrs. ——— Glen Falls, N. Y.

Reduces 32 pounds

"Both my husband and myself were benefited by following the suggestions given in Weight Control. I lost thirty-two pounds. . . We find our general health very much benefited."
Mrs. ——— Charleston, W. Va.

Weights 39 pounds less

"Am thankful that my attention was called to your course on Weight Control. Since January 30th of this year I have reduced 39 pounds. . . I have taken off five inches around my 'silo,' which helps some."

"When I first started reading Weight Control I weighed 267 pounds, and could hardly walk a block without resting. I now walk ten miles by section lines every morning, weather permitting and do it easily."
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The names are withheld out of deference to our subscribers, but will be furnished to any one, sending for the course on free trial, who requests them.

The Secret Explained

Eugene Christian, the world famous food specialist discovered, after years of experiment, the one safe, certain and easily followed method of regaining healthful normal weight. He discovered that certain foods, when eaten together, take off weight instead of adding to it. Certain foods cause fat, others consume fat. For instance, if you eat certain foods at the same meal they are converted into excess fat. But eat these same foods at different times and they will be converted into blood and muscle. Then the excess fat you have already stored up is

used up in energy. There is nothing complicated, nothing hard to understand. It is simply a matter of learning how to combine your food properly.

Free Trial—Send No Money

Elated with his discovery and with the new hope, the renewed vigor it would bring to stout men and women Eugene Christian incorporated his method in the form of simple, easy-to-follow little lessons under the title of "Weight Control—the Basis of Health." This is offered on free trial. Send no money; just mail the coupon, or a letter if you prefer. See your own unnecessary flesh vanish; see how your complexion improves, your eyes brighten, your step becomes more springy. See how it brings you charm, grace, attractiveness—all naturally and without the slightest harm. As soon as the course arrives weigh yourself. Decide how much weight you wish to lose the first week, and each week thereafter. Then try the first lesson. Weigh yourself the next day and note the remarkable result. Still you've taken no medicine, undergone no hardships or self denial. You'll be as happily surprised as the thousands of others who have quickly regained a beautiful, normal figure in this new, delightful, scientific way.

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Beautiful hair is the keynote of many a charming presence. What lustrous softness—what glints and gleams—what dusky shadows—what response to the play of shifting lights!

And yet, what natural beauty lies all unappreciated in hair which has never been given a true opportunity to show its loveliness. Who knows the possibilities of her hair until a joyously healthy scalp has sent *health* tingling along each hair to its very tip?

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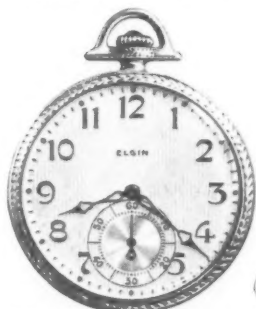
"That famous gesture," ventures a modern wit, "that impressive pacing up and down with bent head, was believed by most biographers to register 'meditation'—but doubtless Napoleon was only winding his watch!"

Time, to this Nineteenth Century Caesar, was the biggest word in the world. Time fought on his side at Austerlitz—tardiness proved his Waterloo. It is fitting that his amazing grasp of the value of Time should be commemorated in modern watchmaking.

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PERFECTOS: 2 for 25¢

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NATIONAL BRANDS
NEW YORK CITY

The Magazine of a Remade World

On the Habit Of Enjoying Poor Health

A Common-sense Editorial by BRUCE BARTON

I VISITED in a town last year where nobody had a good word for anybody. The people are God-fearing citizens in their own esteem, who pay taxes, raise children and attend dutifully to the other obligations of life.

But good news is an outlaw in that community; and an enthusiast would be regarded with suspicion as one who was probably trying to "put something over."

A cold, rainy day seems to bring a sort of grim satisfaction, particularly if it follows a period of sunshine. Folks go around dripping and declaring that they knew well enough such good weather couldn't last. "We was due for a spell of rain, and I guess it come, all right."

Merchants positively glow when they tell that they "aint got" what you want. And there is more joy over one sinner who is caught in the act and whose sin can be told about, than over ten righteous persons who need no repentance.

In all the week I was there, I never once heard anyone say a gracious, enthusiastic thing about a fellow-human-being. Where the facts were such that they could not be given a gloomy turn, they were uttered grudgingly, as though no mortal had a right to such good luck and it certainly would not last.

The inevitable result is that the town is dying. Its industries dried up long ago. Occasionally a newcomer will try to start something; but he withers finally under the cold glances of those who are waiting around to see him fail. And when he leaves, they tell you that they always told you so.

There has been recently a considerable crit-

icism of the Pollyanna philosophy of life. That philosophy can, of course, be carried to extremes. There is something the matter with a man who whistles while his leg is being cut off, or fails to grumble when the coffee is cold.

But between Pollyanna and the average citizen of the community which I visited, and to which I shall never return, give me Pollyanna every time. As a matter of cold dollars and cents, to use no higher standard, the Pollyanna stuff pays.

NAPOLEON was called a "one-hundred-thousand man" by his enemies, because they feared the effect of his enthusiasm on the battlefield more than an extra hundred thousand men. Would he ever have achieved his results if he had "enjoyed poor health"?

"Men are nothing," Montaigne said, "until they get excited." And it is such men—excited by their visions of great achievement, by their faith in their fellows, or in a cause or an ideal, who have founded cities and built railroads and won battles and transformed the world.

The book of Genesis would tell a very different story if the writer of it had lived in the town to which I have referred.

The thirty-first verse of the first chapter now reads: "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good."

A citizen of this complaining community would have written: "And God saw everything that He had made, and sighed and said: 'It aint what you'd call good, and in my opinion, it'll be a whole lot worse before it gets any better.'"

Another of Bruce Barton's Common-sense Editorials will appear on this page in the next issue of The Red Book Magazine.



Whenever soap comes in contact with the skin—use Ivory.

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HERE are seven desirable qualities that soap can have; seven that soap should have to be entirely satisfactory; seven that soap must have to be suitable for universal use — shampoo, bath, toilet, nursery, fine laundry.

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Large Cake

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These essentials are: abundant lather, quick rinsing, mildness, purity, whiteness, fragrance, "it floats."

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THE
RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN
Editor

Every reader of this first installment of Mr. Hughes' masterpiece will be interested in the announcement on page 2 of this issue.

*Here begins the greatest
of all the novels by*

Rupert Hughes

*The story of a girl's
redemption through
the motion pictures*

Souls For Sale

*Illustrated by
Howard Chandler Christy*

"LOS ANGELES!" the sneering preacher cried, as Jonah might have whinnied "Nineveh!" and with equal scorn. "The Spanish missionaries may have called it the City of Angels; but the moving pictures have changed its name to Los Diablos! For it is the central factory of Satan and his minions, the enemy of our homes, the corrupter of our young men and women—the school of crime. Unless it reforms—and soon!—surely, in God's good time, the ocean will rise and swallow it!"

Though he was two thousand miles or more away—as far away, indeed, as the banks of the Mississippi are from the Californian shore—the Reverend Doctor Steddon was so convinced by his own prophetic ire that he would hardly have been surprised to read in the Monday morning's paper that a benevolent earthquake had taken his hint and shrugged the new Babylon off into the Pacific sea.

But of all follies, cursing cities is the vainest. And Los Angeles lived on, quite unaware that its crimes were being denounced in the far-off town of Calverly. The sun itself took two hours to

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Dr. Steddon felt he was proving his love by forbidding his daughter to meet young Farnaby outside the choir loft.

make the trip, and though it was black night outside the little church in Calverly, it was just sunset in Los Angeles.

There was scarlet fire along the ocean of oceans, whose lazy waves stroked the coast with lakelike calm. Over the wide-sprawled city was a smooth sky all of a banana yellow, save for a stain of red grapes at the hem where the sky went down behind the sea-wall of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Among the multitudinous gardens, along the palm-plumed avenues, the twilight loafed. The day seemed to be entangled among the jewel-hung citruses, the fig trees, the papyrus clusters,

among the hedges foaming with a surf of Shasta daisies, the spendthrift waste of yearlong roses, and the smother of vines rolling up white walls in contrary cascades and spilling a froth of flowers along the roofs of many-colored tile.

To the north lay Hollywood, the particular Hades of the cinemaphobes, but curiously demure and innocent in the sunset.

From certain surfaces there and in Culver City, the light was flashed back with heliographic brilliance—from acres on acres of the glass walls and roofs of huge factories, strange workshops where the enslaved sun and the chained lightning wrote stories in photographs. Millions of miles of tiny pictures were taken at the rate of a thousand a minute. Tons of spooled romance went rolling all over the world so that the girl and boy who embraced before one camera were later observed by coolies in Shantung, by the Bisharin of Egypt, and the sundry peoples of Somaliland, Chilkoot, Jedda and Alexandropol—where not? Wherever the sun traveled and the moon reigned, they could watch this reeled minstrelsy gleaming for the delight and indignation of mankind.

Even when the sun had left this capital of the new art, some of the studios would glow on with a man-made day of their own. But most of the factories were closing now, since the toilers had begun betimes in the morning and were scattering homeward for rest or study or mischief. Los Angeles, the huge Spinner, was finishing another day of its traffic in virtue, vice, laughter, love and its other wares.

Even Dr. Steddon, if he could have seen the realm he objugated, would have confessed that the Devil had a certain grace as a gardener, and that his minions were a handsome, happy throng. But Dr. Steddon had never seen Los Angeles and had never seen a moving picture. He knew that the world was going to wrack and ruin,—as usual,—and he laid the blame on the nearest novelty—as usual.

His daughter had heard him lay the blame in previous years on other activities. She wished he wouldn't.

But then she had not escaped blame herself, and she was in a mortal dread now of a vast cloud of obloquy lowering above her and ominous with lightning.

As yet the congregation had found no grave fault with her



"Nonsense!" he cried. "Damnable nonsense! The only ones who are

except a certain over-fervor in the hymns. Her voice had a too manifest beauty, an almost operatic zeal, as it floated from the loft of the volunteer choir—some of whom would never have been drafted if they had not volunteered.

Sundry longer-faced members of the congregation felt that it was not quite respectable for a girl—particularly a clergyman's daughter—to put so much rapture into a church-tune. But Youth, exultant in a very ferocity for life, harried the old hymn like an eaglet struggling upward with a tortoise.

The words were all about a "joy divine," but the elders kept a measure in arrears, hanging back with a funeral trudge to save the day from the young rebel.



ever lost are those who lose themselves. Whatever you do, don't run!"

That one voice, shining above the others, had especially tormented tonight the old parson, across whose silvered head it went floating from the choir-loft just abaft the pulpit. For Dr. Steddon could not understand the seraphic innocence of his daughter's voice. Hearing was not believing. He had known the singer too long and too well to be quite sure of the purity of her piety. He loved her, but with a troubled love. He felt the vague disapproval of the congregation and agreed that there was a little immodesty in the poignancy of her ardor.

Dr. Steddon—he had the D. D. from a seminary that was more liberal with its degrees than its dogmas—had been very impatient for the choir and the congregation to have done

with their hymn and let him preach. He was almost a-shudder with a rapture of his own, the rapture of denunciation, of hatred for the ways of the world, particularly the newest way of the world, the most recent pleasure of the town.

His daughter, glancing across the choir-rail, past the book she shared with Elwood Farnaby, the second tenor, looked down into her father's sparse gray poll, which was turned into a cowl by the central bald spot. She looked almost into his mind and knew his impatience. And she loved him with a troubled love.

Her father and mother had named her Remember—after one of the *Mayflower* girls—nearly three hundred years after. Her father often wished that she had been liker to those Puritan maidens. But that was because he did not know how like she was to them, how much they too had terrified their parents with their love of finery and romantic experiment. For it is only the styles and not the souls that change. There had been loves as dire then as now, and sermons as fierce and as futile as the one that Dr. Steddon was so zealous to repeat, with only the terms and not the spirit altered.

There are chronicles enough to prove that the same quota of the Rememberers and the Praise-gods of Plymouth and the other colonies suffered the same bitter beatitudes and frantic bewilderments as Remember Steddon and Elwood Farnaby endured when their elbows touched in the choir loft of this Midwestern village. Miss Steddon felt a sudden tremor in Farnaby's elbow; then it was gone from hers; she saw his thumb-nail whiten as it gripped the hymn-book

hard. Something in the words he chanted seemed to stab him with a sense of guilt. She felt it a terrible thing for her to stand before that congregation and cry aloud words of ecstasy over her redemption from sin.

Then the hymn was over, and everybody began to sit down solemnly, the whole congregation closing up like a jackknife of many blades.

Before the choir had emptied its lungs of the last long "Ah—men!" and sunk out of sight behind the curtained railing, the old parson was clutching the edges of his pulpit as he announced his text. This was but a motto on the banner of a Saint George charging upon the dragon that despoiled his flock.

Tonight he went after the newest dragon, a vast, shapeless monster, the twentieth century's peculiar monster: the Moving Picture. This was the latest child of Science, that odious Science that is always terrifying Faith with its inventions, its playing cards, its printing presses, novels, higher criticisms, evolutions, anesthetics and archæologies, musical instruments of new and seductive blare, roller skates, bicycles, automobiles, hair-ribbons, hats, corsets, incomplete costumes and all the other tricks for destroying souls. The worst of all, because the latest of all, was the moving picture!

Though Dr. Steddon had never seen a moving picture, he had read what other preachers had said about them, and every day or two he had to pass the advertisements stuck up along the billboards or in front of a gaudy theater that had previously been an almost preferable saloon.

So tonight he launched upon a Savonarolan denunciation. The stenographer who had tried to capture Savonarola's eloquence had to give up and write: "Here I could not go on for tears." There was no stenographer to record Dr. Steddon's thunderbolts. If there had been, it might have been startling to see how many of the very same bolts he had hurled at other detestable activities that interested the townspeople and therefore alarmed their shepherds. As each new fashion or public toy had come into vogue, he had gone at it hammer and tongs. He had never succeeded in doing more than scare off a few people who were scared to death anyway. He had seen the crazes steal in like a tide rolling over him and his protests, then eb' away after he had ceased to fight. Yet still he fought, and always would do as he always had done. And tonight the chief result of Dr. Steddon's onslaught was the thought in the heart of his daughter and various others: "I should like to see Los Angeles."

But it seemed as inaccessible as Carcasone.

When the choir was not singing openly and aboveboard, it was usually busily whispering. Even Elwood Farnaby had to lean over tonight and whisper important news to Remember. He was not permitted to call at her house or to beau her home after the service. Singing beside her in the house of God—that was different! He told her now what he had just learned, that the factory where he was employed would close down the following week. Elwood had worked his way up until he had been made a foreman a few months before. He was to have been promoted to superintendent soon.

His firm made the adding machine cleverly trademarked as the Kalverly Kalkulator, or "K-K-K." But people had suddenly ceased to buy adding machines. The world's chief business was subtraction and cancelation. The last of the uncanceled orders for the K-K-K would be finished in a few days. Mr. Seipp, the bank president, would not advance the money for further production.

Hard times were upon the world, and the little towns were feeling it as well as the cities. Merchants were not selling; therefore they could not buy. They could not collect the bills owed to them, so could not pay the bills they owed. Doctors, lawyers, preachers, teachers, actors, singers and painters—all were involved in the difficulty.

Even the contribution baskets that were passed up the aisles during the services felt the omen. Those who had flung in folded bills laid silver down quietly. Those who had tossed in silver dropped copper stealthily. Dr. Steddon could see the leanness of the baskets from his pulpit; and it meant further privation for him.

To his daughter the news that Elwood would have no job in a week and would know no place to look for one had more than a commercial interest. It was the alarum of fate.

She had loved Elwood since they were children—had loved him all the more for his rags and the squalor of his home. He was the son of the town's most eminent drunkard, old "Fall-down Farnaby," a man whose office had been any saloon he could stand up in. Then prohibition arrived and he had lacked headquarters, but not potatoes. An ingenuity and an assiduity that would have made him a great explorer or a great inventor kept him supplied at a time when there was no legal liquor at all, and when what



They were so abased of hope that when the Doctor told them that Remember would be all right

illegal liquor there was to be had was so expensive that even cheap "moonshine" whisky cost more than dated champagne had cost before.

Among the slipshod children of his doomed family Elwood had somehow managed to acquire ambition. He had struggled up through a youth of woe to a manhood of shackled promise. He had latterly supported his mother and a pack of brothers and sisters. He had even been able to afford to go to the war, had seen France and won the guerdon of a wound or two that made him glorious in Remember's eyes and a little more lovable than ever, not because he won praise for a hero's little while, but

lovable because his wounds added to the burdens that she longed to divide with him.

Her father, however, had been unable to tolerate the thought of his daughter marrying the son of the town sot. Dr. Steddon felt that he was proving his love, his loving wisdom toward his daughter, by forbidding her even to meet young Farnaby outside the choir loft. He was sure that her love would wear out.

He did not know his daughter.

The factory had promoted him twice in its heyday of high prices, and the time had seemed near when they could afford to announce their approaching marriage.

And now the chance was gone.

And this meant to Remember far more than a mere deferment of bliss. She had been trained, indeed, to regard bliss as by no means a right of hers. She had got the idea, indeed, that bliss was pretty sure to be a wrong, a sin. Marriage had been preached to her as a lofty duty, a kind of higher ordeal. Her father would have abhorred the thought that even its rites gave any franchise to raptures unrestrained. Wedlock to him was a responsibility, not a release from pruderies, a solemnity, not a carnival.

And now Remember was to be denied even that somber laborious suburb of paradise.

CHAPTER II

ELWOOD had expected that the bad news would shock her. But he could not understand the look of ghastly terror she gave him. He forgot it in his own bitter brooding and did not observe the deathly white that blanched her pallor.

Yet he had noted that she was paler of late and had added that worry to his backbreaking load of worries. The sunset crimson was gone from her cheeks, and her cheeks were thinner than he had ever before seen them. She coughed incessantly, too, and kept putting her hand to her chest as if it hurt her there.

Her cough annoyed her father as he preached and made him forget some of his best points. But his sermon annoyed her, too.

He was putting himself on record with fatal hatred of sin, and she wished he wouldn't.

A smile twitched her lips and dwelt there at the mockery life was heaping upon his oratory. He was denouncing moving pictures as the source of all evil. Yet Remember had never seen one. Yet again that had not saved her from—

A white-hot wave drove the wan calm from her cheek, and a scarlet war ensued in her veins.

She felt a mad impulse to rise and cry down at him across the brass rail:

"Papa, don't! For heaven's sake, stop!"

But of course she made no sound—except to cough.

When her father completed his discourse with his tremendous thunder against Los Angeles, he

sank into his tall chair. The choir rose for the final hymn. After that came the majestic benediction.

On the way home under the wasted magic of the rising moon, Remember did not walk as usual between her father and mother with a hand on the arm of each. Tonight she kept at her mother's left elbow and clung so tight to the fat warm arm that her mother whispered:

"What's the matter, honey?"

"Nothing, Mamma," she faltered. "I'm just a little tired, I guess."

Her father felt a bit lonely, insulated from his child by his



if she could get away to California right away, they felt as if he had lifted them from the dust.

Dr. Steddon was never more devoted than when he warned Remember to avoid young Farnaby. When she refused his advice, he forbade her to see the boy. She felt that she obeyed a higher duty when she secretly disobeyed her father. She met the young man secretly whenever she could steal away.

Remember's mother had neither the courage to oppose this stealthy romance nor the courage to inform her husband of it. The two lovers made an unwilling accomplice of her, and she was assured that they would marry, the moment Elwood could afford to add Remember's pretty lips to the mouths he was already feeding.

wife; and he had the orator's afterthirst for a draught of praise. He mumbled:

"How was the sermon, Mem?" They called her Mem for short. "You haven't told me how you liked the sermon."

"Oh, it was fine," she said, "perfectly fine. It ought to do a lot of good, too." She added to herself: "But it won't." Then she fell to coughing so hard that her father and mother had to stop by a tree and wait for her to be able to go on.

The big old maple sheltered them like a vast umbrella a moment. Then their eyes were blinded by a great fierce light.

An automobile came straight toward them and ran up over the curbstone before it was brought to a stop by a driver who gasped: "Oh, dear, what's the matter with this darn thing?"

IT was Molly Seipp, daughter of the bank president, learning to run her father's car since he had to discharge the chauffeur. She had chosen Sunday night for practice in order to escape what little traffic troubled Calverly's streets.

Seeing that the Steddon family had taken refuge behind the bole of the tree, she hailed them with her usual impudence of self-railery.

"Don't be afraid! I'm trying to learn to back this fool car. It's almost as big a fool as I am."

Then she set the clutch in reverse, and stepped on the accelerator with such vigor that the car shot backward like a premature rocket and nearly destroyed the twin baby carriage in which young Mrs. Clint Sparrow had taken her dual blessing to visit their grandmother.

But Remember was coughing too violently to be thrilled by the unusual drama, and her father was too deeply concerned in her distress to protest even against Molly Seipp's profanation of the holy evening. Besides, she went to the Episcopal church and was probably doomed anyway.

Dr. Steddon and his wife stared toward each other earnestly through the gloom and their hearts exchanged counsels without words or looks. The rest of the way home Dr. Steddon was not a preacher anxious about his daughter's soul, but a father afraid for her life. Her health of body was outside the parish of a doctor of divinity; that was the business of a doctor of reality.

"Tomorrow, Mem," he said, "I want you to go to see Doctor Bretherick the very first thing."

Mem shook her head and looked frightened. She was afraid of doctors just now; their information was occult. But her father insisted:

"If you don't promise, I'll go fetch him over myself tonight."

This seemed to alarm Remember, and she gasped:

"I promise. I promise! I don't want you to go out again. Good night, Mamma. Good night, Papa. That was a fine sermon tonight."

She did not linger for her usual tryst with Elwood, but hurried to her room, pausing on the stairs for a long bout with her cough. Her parents waited in an anguish of anxiety for her to finish it. Then they put out the lights and went up to bed.

Throughout the night they heard her coughing, a pitiful little noise like the barking of a sick puppy. They were on a rack of fear, but their fear was not hers. The cough to them was an ominous problem. To her it might promise a solution.

CHAPTER III

NEXT morning Remember went about her household chores and said nothing of her promise. When she was reminded of it, she put off going until her mother threatened to go with her. Then she made haste to set out alone.

She walked round Dr. Bretherick's block two or three times until she saw that no one was waiting. She caught the Doctor, indeed, just hurrying out to his buggy. She asked him to turn back and talk to her. And she made sure that the door to his consulting room was closed.

She told him that her parents were afraid her cold was more than a cold, and she coughed for him and endured his investigations and auscultations and the odd babyishness with which he laid his head on her breast and on her shoulder-blades. He asked her many questions, and she grew so confused and apt in blushes that he asked her more. Suddenly he flung her a startled look, gasped and stared into her eyes as if he would ransack her mind. In the mere shifting of his eyelid-muscles she could read amazement, incredulity, conviction, anger, and finally pity.

All he said was: "My child!"

There could be no solemn conference than theirs. Dr. Bretherick had attended Remember's mother when the girl was born. He thought of her still as a child, and now she dazed him and frightened him by her mystic knowledges and her fierce demands that he should help her out of her plight or help her out of the world.

He refused to do either and demanded that she meet her fate with heroism. Somehow he woke a new courage in the panic of her soul, but she was convinced that her future must be one of degradation in obscurity.

She quoted him the old saw:

"It doesn't matter what a man does, but once a woman slips, she is lost forever."

"Nonsense!" he cried, and added: "Damned and damnable nonsense! It isn't true and never was. The only ones who get lost are the ones who lose themselves. Don't run! Whatever you do, don't run! Be sorry. And sin no more. But don't run!"

"The public is like a cat. It has the pounce instinct. It can only jump on the mouse that runs. Cats don't mean to be cruel to mice. They just can't help springing when the mouse tries to get away. By and by they smell blood, and then it's all over. Hold your head up and carry your cross. And 'let him that is without sin cast the first stone.' You've heard your father say that often enough."

"My father!" she moaned. "Don't speak of my poor father. What will he say? What will the people think of him? He'd never dare face the congregation. I must run away and hide. I just must. Or kill myself. I've got no right to destroy my father. And my mother! She has had so much sorrow, and she's trusted me; and he's been so good, and he tried to take such care of me."

"Care! Who can take care of anybody else?" the Doctor groaned with a crooked smile. "There's just one person who can take care of you now—"

THIS woke a pride of another sort in her heart. She was of a type increasing swiftly in the world (one of the few things called "modern" that are really modern), the woman who asks no man to take upon himself the whole burden of her food, her clothes, her thought, her destiny or even her misdeeds.

She lived in a generation where the girl plans to earn her living as the boy had always planned. She had come subtly to believe that a wife should no more be supported by her husband than a husband by his wife.

Her father loathed and dreaded what has always been called the modern woman. He denounced her in the pulpit and at home. For a time he had explained "the wickedness of these modern days" by the disgraceful discontent of certain women, comparing them with the simple, sweet, home-loving women of old-fashioned days, and carefully omitting reference to the cruel, lawless, extravagant, home-destroying women who were just as old-fashioned and just as numerous in the days when he was young—as he had known when he was young, but forgot as he got old.

But after the women of his congregation had all become voters in spite of themselves, and he could see no change in their appearance or their activities, he dropped that denunciation and took up the moving picture as the new toy of his anxiety.

Remember herself had felt no stirrings toward scholastic pursuits, or toward a professional career as a doctor, a lawyer, or even as a trained nurse. She wanted to earn money only for one reason—that she might ease the burden of her husband.

Calverly had offered little encouragement, however, for a womanly career. To take in washing, sewing, cook, wait on the table, wash dishes and make beds for other families, to work in a store or one of the few factories—these had made up the entire choice.

She loved Elwood with all the womanliness primeval or modern that always marked the type of girl she happened to be. The other types, selfish, wanton, cold, vain, meek, shy, shameless, intellectual, passionate, artistic, aristocratic, Philistine, plebeian, that have always existed in savage or civilized groups, have always met love and destiny in their own ways, and always will so meet them. And so Remember followed the law of her pattern.

Love married her heart to Farnaby, and now she was a hostage of shame without means of defense.

And it was her nature to blame herself for her estate, and to defend her beloved enemy from any of the consequences of the war.

When Doctor Bretherick suggested marriage, he revealed to her the peculiar heartlessness of her fate. Marriage meant to

her that two people went to church in two carriages, drove away consecrated in one, and thenceforward lived in the same house. That familiar exploit had been the one grand plan of Elwood's soul and hers.

But Elwood lived in the crowded shack which his father still owned for lack of anybody to buy it. The house was full of children, and progressively the youngest brother always slept with Elwood. It was hard enough for Elwood to keep the roof over their heads. It was not to be thought of that Remember should join that wretched crowd.

At the minister's house there was much neatness and peace, but no more room than at Elwood's. The progressively next to the youngest sister usually slept with Remember. It was unthinkable that Elwood should join that crowded ark.

For Elwood to leave his family and take a new house with Remember would mean that he must abandon his mother and the other children to the mercy of Fall-down Farnaby's brutality and indifference. That was, to a dutiful youth like Elwood, unthinkable.

So many things were unthinkable with these young souls! But Nature does not think. Nature wants. Nature strives to get, and getting, devours—or not getting, starves, or shifts her approach.

Remember might have figured out numberless ways of arranging a marriage with Elwood if she had been more intelligent or less confused. But she was not brilliant of mind, and she was subjected utterly to the coercion of discipline.

She was like a flower grown in a pot on a shelf. Lacking strength to break it and go free, she would stay small and pretty and obscure. If something happened to break the pot and fling her out on the open soil, she would make a desperate effort for life, and if the soil were fertile, she might grow to amazing heights and beauties; if the soil were sterile, she would simply die. But she had nothing within her to fling her off the shelf.

So now when Doctor Bretherick proposed marriage, he proposed something unthinkable at present; and now that Elwood's job was gone, unthinkable as far forward as the girl's easily baffled mind could think.

Doctor Bretherick, who knew so much about Calverly people, did not happen to know that Remember and Elwood had been meeting secretly. So he did not take young Farnaby into consideration. He was a little surprised when Remember refused to tell him the name of the man. He admired her wretchedly when

he saw her trying to protect the fellow even from reproof.

"He's no more to blame than I am, and I have no right to ruin his life."

When Dr. Bretherick called the man a scoundrel, she grew fierce in his defense.

Dr. Bretherick wasted no time on the expression of virtuous horror. He was an almost total abstainer from the vice of blame. When he found people sick or delirious or going insane, he did not revile them for recklessness in catching cold or catching fever or taking in devils for tenants.

He tried to restore them to comfort and the practice of life. Love was endemic, and good fortune was more frequent than good conduct. He felt no call to insult the victims of bad luck in love. His answer to Remember's greed for all the blame and all the punishment was a gentle reminder:

"It's not a question, my child, of your rights or his. It's a question of the rights of—another."

Remember wept and beat her clenched hands upon her brow and on the Doctor's desk. He let her fight it out, finding no consolation fit to offer. He studied her as he had studied many another wretch tossing on a bed of coals, and crazed

with pains of body or mind. He saw how beautiful she was, how thrilling and how thrilled with that fire which builds homes and burns them up, kindles romance and devastation.

He felt a little sympathy even for the unknown man, and imagined how helpless the wretch might have been to

resist that incandescence in which Remember was as helpless as he, since the flame cannot become ice by any power of its own.

The Doctor reached out and clenched hands with Remember in the fiercer throes of her regret, or laid a fatherly caress on her bowed head.

"He must have told you he loved you," he said.

"But he does love me, and I love him."

"Then why is he unwilling to marry you?"

"He's not! There's nothing on earth he wants more than that. But he can't, he can't!"

"Is he—is he married to some one else?"

Remember's lifted face was like a mask of horror, dripping with tears but aghast at such infamy. In every depth of shame there is a lower pit from (Continued on page 150)



"The car came boom'n' over the sidewalk and mowed right into the crowd. One or two got knocked down."



"Your pardon, monsieur," said the Prefect of

The Man with Steel

Illustrated by

THE great drawing-room through which Monsieur Jonquelle advanced was empty.

But it was not silent. A vague music, like some weird conception of Hoffman, seemed to feel about the room, extending itself—a thing that crept blindly and disturbed as though it would escape from something that followed it tirelessly and invisibly.

It required the fingers of a master, on the board of a keyed instrument, to produce these sounds. They came from the room beyond, a second drawing-room looking out on the Bois de Boulogne.

Monsieur Jonquelle had not allowed the servant to announce him.

"One is not permitted to disturb Lord Valleys at this hour," the servant had said.

Monsieur Jonquelle's card had added to the man's perplexity. One was also not permitted to deny an entrance, anywhere, at any hour, to the Prefect of Police of Paris. The man had made a hopeless gesture, like one resigning himself to the inevitable.

And so Monsieur Jonquelle had entered.

It was a beautiful house beyond the Arc de Triomphe, built by that extraordinary American who had married two princes, divorced them both, and gone elsewhere on her search for new sensations.

It was of pale rose-colored stone with a great court, a wide, circular stairway, and these exquisite drawing-rooms now empty but for the priceless furniture and this haunting music.

Monsieur Jonquelle, after the door had closed behind him, remained for some moments quite motionless in the eddy, as one might write it, of this strange, weird music, in which there was always a note of ruthless vigor—a note of barbaric vigor, harsh and determined.

Monsieur Jonquelle could not place the music in any remembered composition. It was not the work of any master that he knew. It was an improvisation of the fingers that produced it. And perhaps for that reason the Prefect of Police gave it close attention.

Presently he advanced into the room from which the music



Police. "I am desolated to disturb you."

Fingers

By Melville
Davisson Post

Joseph C. Coll

issued. He paused a moment in the doorway, watching the figure beyond him at the piano—a stooped, broad-shouldered figure with white, nimble fingers hard as steel. Then he spoke.

"Your pardon, monsieur," said the Prefect of Police. "I am desolated to disturb you."

The man at the piano sprang up and turned swiftly as though his body accomplished the act with a single motion.

To the eye, the man was strange. His shoulders were very broad and stooped; his face was wide, massive—the face of a Slav. His hair was thick, close and heavy, but it was not long, and affected no mannerisms.

The man was very carefully dressed, after the English fashion, and with its well-bred restraint. But the impression he gave one was decidedly not English. It was that of a Slav adapted to an English aspect.

The eyes one did not see. One rarely saw them. They seemed to be hidden by heavy lids like curtained windows. And there was no expression in the face. The face was a mask. It seemed always in repose. The big nose, the square, brutal jaw, and the

wide planes of the face, were white as with a sort of pallor. Monsieur Jonquelle had a sudden, swift impression. The man before him was either the greatest criminal or the greatest genius that he had ever seen.

Jonquelle had also a further impression of failure. He had meant to startle this man, and observe what followed. And he had startled him; but untrue to every experience, there was nothing to observe. The man's face remained without an expression; he was behind it hidden from every eye. It was a mask that could not be changed by the will of another. Monsieur Jonquelle wondered in what manner it would change at the will of the man that it so admirably obscured. It was a thing he was not interested to discover.

It was only for an instant that the man was without expression. Then he smiled and came forward into the room. The smile began with a queer lifting of the lip and extended vaguely with but a slight changing of the man's features.

His voice, when he spoke, was low, well modulated and composed. His manner was easy and gracious.

"Ah!" he said. "It is Monsieur Jonquelle, the Prefect of Police of Paris. I am honored."

He placed a great chair by the window. It was a carved, heavy chair upholstered in a superb tapestry, a chair that servants did not move in a drawing-room. But Lord Valleys placed it by the window easily, as though its immense weight were nothing to him.

He indicated the chair with a gesture and withdrew to another beyond the window—a little beyond the light of it, beside a curtain.

Monsieur Jonquelle removed his gloves; he sat a moment twisting them in his fingers like one in a certain embarrassment. His host, also seated, regarded him with the vague smile which appeared now as a sort of background on the mask of his face. The Prefect of Police hesitated.

"Monsieur," he said, "I have called upon you for an opinion upon a problem which has always perplexed me. It is a problem upon which the opinions of persons without experience are wholly without value, and unfortunately, all those who have had experience and were, therefore, able to give me an opinion, have been always persons lacking in a certain element of intelligence. I have not had the opinion of a man of intelligence, who was also a man of experience, upon this problem."

He paused. The man before him did not reply. He waited as in a profound courtesy for Monsieur Jonquelle to complete the subject with which he had opened his discourse. He had taken a small chair, and he sat in it as a man of great strength and vigor and of an unusual bulk rests his weight upon something which he is uncertain will support it. He did not move, but the expression in his face changed slightly. His eyebrows lifted as in a courteous inquiry. Monsieur Jonquelle went on. He seemed not entirely at ease.

"I shall not pretend at ignorance of your affairs, monsieur. The law-courts of England are brutal and direct. They have no consideration for anyone, and the press of those islands has a less restraint. When one is charged with a crime in England, and comes into its courts, no humiliation is neglected. That one is innocent means nothing; that this innocence is presently demonstrated does not preserve one, in the events preceding such a verdict, from every imaginable humiliation."

Monsieur Jonquelle continued to hesitate. But he went on.

"Monsieur," he said, "out of this unfortunate experience you will have come, I feel, with a certain opinion upon the problem

which disturbs me. And I am sure, monsieur, you will not deny me the benefit of that opinion."

The Prefect of Police looked up like one who with hesitation requests a favor from another.

Lord Valleys replied immediately.

"I shall be very glad to give you my opinion upon any point in the matter," he said. "Surely I have been spared little. I have had every experience of humiliation. The criminal law of England is a bungling and cruel device. Those who find themselves concerned with it, I profoundly pity. There is no consideration of family or culture that in any way mitigates its severity or in any direction preserves one from odium, once the machinery of a criminal court of England is on its way. The experience of it is a horror to me, monsieur; but if it can result in any benefit to you or to another, I am willing to recall it. What is the problem, monsieur, upon which you would have my opinion?"

"It is this, monsieur," replied the Prefect of Police. "Is it your conclusion, upon this experience of life, that there is a Providence of God that undertakes to adjust the affairs of mankind,—to assist the helpless and to acquit the innocent,—or do you believe that it is the intelligence of man that accomplishes this result? . . . What is it, monsieur, that moves behind the machinery of the world—chance, luck, fortune or some sort of Providence?"

Lord Valleys seemed to reflect while the Prefect of Police was speaking, and he now replied with little hesitation.

"Chance, monsieur," he said, "is unquestionably the greatest and most mysterious factor in all human affairs, but it is modified and diverted by the

human will. . . . Human intelligence, monsieur, and chance are the two factors."

The Prefect of Police continued to look down at his hands.

"I have been of a different opinion, Lord Valleys," he said. "I think there is an intention behind events, a sort of will to justice, to righteousness, as one has said. It is not chance as we usually define the word, and the human will cannot circumvent it. . . . It is strange, as I see it, Lord Valleys. This thing we call human intelligence seems to be able to aid, to assist, to advance the vague, immense, persistent impulse behind events, and to delay and to disturb it, but not ultimately to defeat it."

"Take the extraordinary events that have happened to you, Lord Valleys, and tell me, if you can, how they could have arrived by chance!"

"Your uncle, Lord Winton, took the (Continued on page 94)



"I made a desperate effort, there in that underground cell. Finally, blinded, choked, I ran out."

The Tiger

By

Booth Tarkington

THE two little girls, Daisy Mears and Elsie Threamer, were nine years old, and they lived next door to each other; but there the coincidence came to an end; and even if any further similarity between them had been perceptible, it could not have been mentioned openly without causing excitement in Elsie's family. Elsie belonged to that small class of exquisite children once seen on canvas in the days when a painter would exhibit without shame a picture called "Ideal Head;" she was one of those rare little fair creatures at whom grown people, murmuring tenderly, turn to stare. Elsie's childhood was attended, in fact, by the murmurs and exclamations not only of strangers but of people who knew her well. "Greuze!" they said, or "A child Saint Cecilia!" or "That angelic sweetness!" But whatever form preliminary admiration might take, the concluding tribute was almost always the same: "And so unconscious, with it all!" When some unobservant and rambling-minded person did wander from the subject without mentioning Elsie's unconsciousness, she was apt to take a dislike to him.

People often wondered what that ineffable child with the shadowy downcast eyes was thinking about. They would "give anything," they declared, to know what she was thinking about. But nobody wondered what Daisy Mears was thinking about—on the contrary, people were frequently only too sure they knew what Daisy was thinking about.

From the days of her earliest infancy, Elsie, without making any effort, was a child continually noticed and acclaimed; whereas her next neighbor was but an inconspicuous bit of background, which may have been more trying for Daisy than anyone realized. No doubt it also helped great aspirations to sprout within her, and was thus the very cause of the abrupt change in her character during their mutual tenth summer. For it was at this time that Daisy all at once began to be more talked about than Elsie had ever been. All over the neighborhood and even beyond its borders, she was spoken of probably dozens of times as often as Elsie was—and with more feeling, more emphasis, more gesticulation, than Elsie had ever evoked.

Daisy had accidentally made the discovery that the means of becoming prominent are at hand for anybody, and that the process of using them is the simplest in the world; for of course all that a person desirous of prominence needs to do is to follow his unconventional impulses. In this easy way prodigious events can be produced at the cost of the most insignificant exertion,



Illustrated by
William
Van Dresser

"Good gracious!" she exclaimed. "What a bad, rude little boy!"

as is well known by people who have felt a temptation to step from the roof of a high building, or to speak out inappropriately in church. Daisy still behaved rather properly in church, but several times she made herself prominent in Sunday school; and she stepped off the roof of her father's garage, merely to become more prominent among a small circle of colored people who stood in the alley begging her not to do it.

She spent the rest of that day in bed—for after all, while fame may so easily be obtained, it has its price, and the bill is inevitably sent in—but she was herself again the next morning, and at about ten o'clock announced to her mother that she had decided to "go shopping."

Mrs. Mears laughed, and just to hear what Daisy would say, asked quizzically: "Go shopping?" What in the world do you mean, Daisy?"

"Well, I think it would be a nice thing for me to do, Mamma," Daisy explained. "You an' Grandma and Aunt Clara, you always keep sayin', 'I b'lieve I'll go shopping.' I want to, too."

"What would you do?"

"Why, I'd go shopping the way you do. I'd walk in a store an' say: 'Have you got any unbleached muslin? Oh, I thought

this'd be only six cents a yard! Haven't you got anything nicer?' Everything like that. I know, Mamma. I know any 'mount o' things to say when I go shopping. Can't I go shopping, Mamma?"

"Yes, of course," her mother said, smiling. "You can pretend our big walnut tree is a department-store and shop all you want."

"Well—" Daisy began, and then realizing that the recommendation of the walnut tree was only a suggestion, and not a command, she said, "Well, thank you, Mamma," and ran outdoors, swinging her brown straw hat by its elastic cord. The interview had taken place in the front hall, and Mrs. Mears watched the lively little figure for a moment as it was silhouetted against the ardent sunshine at the open doors; then she turned away, smiling, and for the rest of the morning her serene thought of Daisy was the picture of a ladylike child playing quietly near the walnut tree in the front yard.

Daisy skipped out to the gate, but upon the public sidewalk, just beyond, she moderated her speed and looked as important as she could, assuming at once the rôle she had selected in the little play she was making up as she went along. In part, too, her importance was meant to interest Elsie Thremer, who was standing in graceful idleness by the hedge that separated the Thremer's yard from the sidewalk.

"Where you goin', Daisy?" the angelic neighbor inquired.

Daisy paused and tried to increase a distortion of her face, which was her conception of a businesslike concentration upon "shopping." "What?" she inquired, affecting absent-mindedness.

"Where you goin'?"

"I haf to go shopping today, Elsie."

Elsie laughed. "No, you don't."

"I do, too. I go shopping almost all the time lately. I haf to."

"You don't, either," Elsie said. "You don't either haf to."

"I do, *too*, haf to!" Daisy retorted. "I'm almos' worn out, I haf to go shopping so much."

"Where?"

"Every single place," Daisy informed her impressively. "I haf to go shopping all the way downtown. I'll take you with me if you haf to go shopping, too. D'you want to?"

Elsie glanced uneasily over her shoulder, but no one was visible at any of the windows of her house. Obviously, she was interested in her neighbor's proposal, though she was a little timorous. "Well—" she said. "Of course I *ought* to go shopping, because the truth is I got more shopping to do than most anybody. I haf to go shopping so *much* I just have the backache all the time! I guess—"

"Come on," said Daisy. "I haf to go shopping in every single store downtown, and there's lots o' stores on the way we can go shopping in before we get there."

"All right," her friend agreed. "I guess I rilly better."

She came out to the sidewalk, and the two turned toward the city's central quarter of trade, walking quickly and talking with an accompaniment of many little gestures. "I rilly don't know how I do it all," said Elsie, assuming a care-worn air. "I got so much shopping to do, an' everything, my fam'ly all say they wonder I don't break down an' haf to go to a sanitarian or somep'm, because I *do* so much."

"Oh, it's worse'n that with *me*, my dear!" said Daisy. "I declare I doe' know how I do live through it all! Every single day, it's like this: I haf to go shopping all day long, my dear!"

"Well, I haf to, too, my dear! I *never* get time to even sit down, my dear!"

Daisy shook her head ruefully. "Well, goodness knows the last time I sat down, my dear!" she said. "My fam'ly say I got to take *some* rest, but how can I, with all this terrable shopping to do?"

"Oh, my dear!" Elsie exclaimed. "Why, my dear, I haven't sat down since Christmas!"

Thus they enacted a little drama, improvising the dialogue, for of course every child is both playwright and actor, and spends most of his time acting in scenes of his own invention—which is one reason that going to school may be painful to him; lessons are not easily made into plays, though even the arithmetic writers do try to help a little, with their dramas of grocers and eggs, and



farmers and bushels and quarts. A child is a player, and an actor is a player; and both "play" in almost the same sense—the essential difference being that the child's art is instinctive, so that he is not so conscious of just where reality begins and made-up drama ends. Daisy and Elsie were now representing and exaggerating their two mothers, with a dash of aunt thrown in; they felt that they *were* the grown people they played they were; and the more they developed these "secondary personalities," the better they believed in them.

"An' with all my trouble an' everything," Daisy said, "I jus' never get a minute to myself. Even my shopping, it's all for the fam'ly."

"So's mine," Elsie said promptly. "Mine's every single bit for the fam'ly, an' I never, never get through."

"Well, look at *me*!" Daisy exclaimed, her hands fluttering in movements she believed to be illustrative of the rush she lived in. "My fam'ly keep me on the run from the minute I get up

"I want to look at some taffeta," Daisy said impatiently. "It's somep'm you wear."
 "What for?" he said. "You mean some brand of porous plaster?"



polish, an' underwear, an' oilcloth, an' lamp-shades, an' some ostrich feathers for my blue vevvut hat. An' then I gotta get some—"

"Oh, my dear! I got more'n that I haf to look at," Elsie interrupted. And she, likewise, went into details; but as Daisy continued with her own, and they both talked at the same time, the effect was rather confused, though neither seemed to be at all disturbed on that account. Probably they were pleased to think they were thus all the more realistically adult.

It was while they were chattering in this way that Master Laurence Coy came wandering along a side-street that crossed their route, and catching sight of them, considered the idea of joining them. He had a weakness for Elsie, and an antipathy for Daisy, the latter feeling sometimes not unmingled with the most virulent repulsion; but there was a fair balance struck; in order to be with Elsie, he could bear being with Daisy. Yet both were girls, and regarded in that light alone, not the company he cared to be thought of as deliberately choosing. Nevertheless he had found no boys at home that morning; he was at a loss what to do with himself, and bored. Under these almost compulsory circumstances, he felt justified in consenting to join the ladies; and overtaking them at the crossing, he stopped and spoke to them.

"Hay, there," he said, taking care not to speak too graciously. "Where you two goin', talkin' so much?"

They paid not the slightest attention to him, but continued busily on their way.

"My dear Mrs. Smith!" Daisy exclaimed, speaking with increased loudness. "I jus' pozzatively never have a minute to my own affairs! If I don't get a rest from my house-keepin' pretty soon, I doe' know what on earth's goin' to become o' my nerves!"

"Oh, Mrs. Jones!" Elsie exclaimed. "It's the same way with me, my dear. I haf to have the doctor for my nerves, every morning at seven or eight o'clock. Why, my dear, I never—"

"Hay!" Laurence called. "I said: 'Where you goin', talkin' so much?' Di'n'chu hear me?"

But they were already at some distance from him and hurrying on as if they had seen and heard nothing whatever. Staring after them, he caught a dozen more "my dears" and exclamatory repetitions of "Mrs. Smith, you don't say so!" and "Why, Mis-suz Jones!" He called again, but the two little figures, heeding him less than they did the impalpable sunshine about them, hastened on down the street, their voices gabbling, their heads wagging importantly, their arms and hands incessantly lively in airy gesticulation.

Laurence was thus granted that boon so often defined by connoisseurs of twenty as priceless—a new experience. But he had no gratitude for it; what he felt was indignation. He lifted up his voice and bawled:

"HAY! Di'n'chu hear what I SAID? Haven't you got 'ny EARS?"

Well he knew they had ears, and that these ears heard him; but on the spur of the moment he was unable to think of anything more scathing than this inquiry. The shoppers went on, impervious, ignoring him with all their previous airiness—with a slight accentuation of it, indeed—even when he bellowed at them a second time and a third. Stung, he was finally inspired to add:

till after I go to bed. I declare I don't get time to say my prayers! Today I thought I *might* get a little rest for once in my life. But no! I haf to go shopping!"

"So do I, my dear! I haf to look at— Well, what do you haf to look at when we go in the stores?"

"Me? I haf to look at everything! There isn't a thing left in our house. I haf to look at doilies, an' all kinds embrawdries, an' some aperns for the servants, an' taffeta, an' two vases for the liberry mantelpice, an' some new towels, an' kitchen-stove-

"Hay! Are you gone *crazy*?" But they were halfway to the next crossing.

A bitterness descended upon Laurence. "What I care?" he muttered. "I'll *show* you what I care!" However, his action seemed to deny his words, for instead of setting about some other business to prove his indifference, he slowly followed the shoppers. He was driven by a necessity he felt to make them comprehend his displeasure with their injurious flouting of himself and of etiquette in general. "Got 'ny politeness?" he muttered, and replied morosely: "No, they haven't—they haven't got sense enough to know what politeness means! Well, I'll show 'em! They'll see before I get through with 'em! Oh, oh! Jus' wait a little: they'll be beggin' me quick enough to speak to 'em. 'Oh, Laur-*runce*, please!' they'll say. 'Please speak to us, Laur-*runce*. Won'chu please speak to us, Laur-*runce*? We'd jus' give *anything* to have you speak to us, Laur-*runce*! Won' chu, Laur-*runce*, pull-*lease*?' Then I'll say: 'Yes, I'll speak to you, an' you better listen if you want to learn some sense!' Then I'll call 'em everything I can think of!"

It might have been supposed that he had some definite plan for bringing them thus to their knees in supplication, but he was only solacing himself by sketching a triumphant climax founded upon nothing. Meanwhile he continued morbidly to follow, keeping about fifty yards behind them.

"Poot!" he sneered. "Think they're wunnaful, don't they? You wait! They'll see!"

He came to a halt, staring. "Now what they doin'?"

Elsie and Daisy had gone into a small drug-store, where Daisy straightway approached the person in charge, an elderly man of weary appearance. "Do you keep taffeta?" she asked importantly.

The elderly man moved toward his rather shabby soda-fountain, replying: "I got chocolate and strawb'ry and v'nilla. I don't keep no fancy syrups."

"Oh, my, no!" Daisy exclaimed pettishly.

"I mean taffeta you wear."

"What?"

"I mean taffeta you wear."

"Wear?" he said.

"I want to look at some *taffeta*," Daisy said impatiently. "*Taffeta*."

"Taffy?" the man said vaguely. "I don't keep no line of candies."

Daisy frowned, and shook her head. "I guess he's kind of deaf or somep'm," she said to Elsie; and then she shouted again at the elderly man: "*Taffeta*! It's somep'm you wear. You wear it on you!"

"What for?" he said. "I aint deaf. You mean some brand of porous plaster? Mustard plaster?"

"Oh, my, no!" Daisy exclaimed, and turned to Elsie. "This is just the way it is. Whenever I go shopping, they're *always* out of everything I want!"

"Oh, it's exactly the same with me, my dear," Elsie returned. "It's too provoking! Rilly, the shops in this town—"

"Listen here," the proprietor interrupted, and he regarded these fastidious customers somewhat unfavorably. "You're wastin' my time on me. Say what it is you want or go some-*wheres* else."

"Well, have you got some *very* nice blue-silk lamp-shades?" Daisy inquired, and she added: "With gold fringe an' tassels?"

"Lamp-shades!" he said, and he had the air of a person who begins to feel seriously annoyed. "Listen! Go on out o' here!"

But Daisy ignored his rudeness. "Have you got any *very* good unbleached muslin?" she asked.

"You go on out o' here!" the man shouted. "You go on out o' here, or I'll untie my dog."

"Well, I declare!" Elsie exclaimed as she moved toward the door. "I never was treated like this in all my days!"



She darted across the room and ran behind the bar.

"What kind of a dog is it?" Daisy asked, for she was interested.

"It's a *biting* dog," the drug-store man informed her; and she thought best to retire with Elsie. The two came out to the sidewalk and went on their way, busier than ever with their chatter; and after a moment the injured party in the background again followed them.

"They'll find out what's goin' to happen to 'em," he muttered, continuing his gloomy rhapsody. "'Please speak to us, Laur-*runce*,' they'll say. 'Oh, Laur-*runce*, pull-*lease*!' An' then I'll jus' keep on laughin' at 'em an' callin' 'em everything the worst I ever heard, while they keep hollerin': 'Oh, Laur-*runce*, pull-*lease*!'"

A passer-by, a kind-faced woman of middle age, caught the murmur from his slightly moving lips, and halted inquiringly. "What is it, little boy?" she asked.

"What?" he said.

"Were you speaking to me, little boy? Didn't you say 'Please'?"

"No, I didn't," he replied, coloring high; for he did not like to be called "little boy" by anybody, and he was particularly averse to this form of address on the lips of a total stranger. Moreover no indignant person who is talking to himself cares to be asked what he is saying. "I never said a thing to you," he added crossly. "What's the matter of you, anyhow?"



whereupon Daisy and Elsie were treated to a scene like a conjuror's trick.

"Good gracious!" she exclaimed. "What a bad, rude little boy! Shame on you!"

"I aint a little boy, an' shame on your own self!" he retorted; but she had already gone upon her way, and he was again following the busy shoppers. As he went on, his mouth was again slightly in motion, though it was careful not to open, and his slender neck was imperceptibly distended by small explosions of sound, for he continued his dialogues, but omitted any enunciation that might attract the impertinent attention of strangers. "It's none o' your ole biznuss!" he said, addressing the middle-aged woman in this internal manner. "I'll show you who you're talkin' to! I guess when you get through with *me* you'll know somep'm! Shame on your own self!" Then his eyes grew large as they followed the peculiar behavior of the two demoiselles before him. "My goodness!" he said.

Daisy was just preceding Elsie into a barber-shop.

"Do you keep taffeta or—or lamp-shades?" Daisy asked of the barber nearest the door.

This was a fat colored man, a mulatto. He had a towel over the jowl and eyes of his helpless customer, and standing behind the chair, employed his thumbs and fingers in a slow and rhythmic manipulation of the man's forehead. Meanwhile he continued an unctuous monologue, paying no attention whatever to Daisy's

inquiry. "I dess turn roun' an' walk away little bit," said the barber. "N'en I turn an' look 'er over up an' down from head to foot. 'Yes,' I say. 'You use you' mouth full freely,' I say, 'but dess kinely gim me leave fer to tell you, you ain' got nothin' to rouse up no int'est o' *mine* in you. I make mo' money,' I say, 'I make mo' money in a day than whut Henry ever see in a full year, an' if you tryin' to climb out o' Henry's class an' into mine—"

"Listen!" Daisy said, raising her voice. "Do you keep taffeta or—"

"Whut you say?" the barber asked, looking coldly upon her and her companion.

"We're out shopping," Daisy explained. "We want to look at some—"

"Listen me," the barber interrupted. "Run out o' here. Run out."

Daisy moved nearer him. "What you doin' to that man's face?" she asked.

"Nem mine! Nem mine!" he said haughtily.

"What were you tellin' him?" Daisy inquired. "I mean all about Henry's class an' usin' her mouth so full freely. Who was?"

"Run out!" the barber shouted. "Run out!"

"Well, I declare!" Daisy exclaimed, (Continued on page 143)

Moonlight

By George Kibbe Turner

Illustrated by
Robert W. Stewart

The Story So Far:

JOHN SCHMAAR was quite sure that he knew women for what they were—light things, beautiful, expensive toys. He'd had little experience with them in his early days as a professional gambler in the West; of late, however, he had found them useful in the more highly evolved financial operations he carried on at his country place on the Hudson.

Take Aileen Dulcifer, for instance, the pretty little waster who had run through her inheritance and to pay a bridge-debt had given Schmaar a check which was returned N. S. F., by the bank; Schmaar found it easy, under the circumstances, to persuade Aileen to accept much-needed money from him, easy to persuade her that there was no harm in doing what he asked in exchange—keep the wealthy young Westerner, Gladden, amused, so that Gladden would stay on in New York until a certain "financial deal" Schmaar had on with him should be completed. And when, that afternoon, a group of Schmaar's guests, men and women, were out on the cliff above the river in front of his place, and the Bannerman girl told again the story of the Indian maiden who had jumped over in the effort to save her lover,—and thus gave the place the name Lovers' Leap,—Schmaar again showed his opinion by offering a thousand dollars to any modern woman who would make even the first partial descent.

So, some days later, when Schmaar informed Aileen that the deal had turned out badly for Gladden, that it would now be unwise for her to marry the impoverished Westerner, the gambler was a bit surprised that she took the matter so seriously. He let her run on, however—best let her work off her hysteria. And then it was that Aileen Dulcifer, in the effort to save her lover from Schmaar, made a strange proposal to him.

CHAPTER IV

SCHMAAR looked her over—before she got going again—and saw the shape she was in: flushed, staring like a scared school-child, stammering with excitement.

"Listen! Wait a minute," he cautioned. He couldn't have her like that if anybody came in. "Before you go any farther, sit down and cool off!"

"Take your time," he told her. "They won't be down—the rest of them—yet awhile."

He got up then—giving her time to get a new grip on herself, and walked over to the old French window at the end of the room. They were in his library, on the east side of the house. Looking out, he saw it was to be a moonlight night again; the fall moon was just then rising over the rounded dead-gold hills across the Hudson.

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"The great sacrifice, huh?"
do you like it.

Moonlight meant little in the life of John Schmaar; his education—as the education of the poor is apt to be—had been neglected in this regard. Yet at this time, as all mariners know, in October, the moon is at the height of her power 'on sea and land.

John Schmaar, watching at his window, saw that enormous yellow disk separate itself from its dull golden hill, from the black shadows of trees against it, and swim up into the dull violet sky. He felt the sense of something new and extraordinary just come into the world, that sensation of something stealing

upon you that comes sometimes at the rising of the moon, especially in a clear, still, mild October night.

The daylight was not yet all gone. To the south, farther down across the Hudson, the rich, soft illumination of the autumn after-light struck on the white, square buildings of the upper city. The lights were coming on about them; they looked, in the breathless night, against the violet velvet sky, like a white enchanted city in a child's tale.

To John Schmaar, of course, they did not look that way. In common with his kind, he had lived a childhood without fairy tales, and a youth without the more delicate shades of illusions, the more sentimental views of love and women. He had lived his later life much at night certainly—but not night out of doors! All that he retained of memory from what he saw outside now, was that vague sense of surprise and wonder and almost suspicion men have at moonrise—at the sliding of this great new thing up into the night. He had learned to feel something of the sort before, perhaps,—in his more impressionable childhood,—when he had watched the same natural phenomenon on an even greater scale, seen the moon come stealing up over the spear-pointed fir trees upon the mountains of the West—like a still, sudden messenger of God!

He turned and came again to where the girl was



said Schmaar to himself, watching her. "How now you've got it?"

sitting. It seemed to him now, when he looked at her, that they might safely go on again.

"That's right," he said, sitting down near her once more. "Ease up a little! Now, what is this little thing you've got up your sleeve?"

"Did you ever hear of an American duel?" she asked him, leaning forward in her chair, still staring, he saw, but quieter—quite a little quieter.

"No," he told her, "—not by that name." And yet at the same time he did have a vague sort of half-memory.

"I never did either—before just lately," she went on, still staring at him, a little absent-mindedly. "But that's what they call it abroad, so they say. The English called it that—in the war."

"Abroad, huh?" John Schmaar said to himself. He saw right away, of course, what it probably was—another wild idea of Gladden's—or some other of those boys who had come back to fill girls' heads with emotional novelties.

"Well, what is it?" he asked finally.

"It's what I said," she told him, looking up. "It gives everybody an equal chance."

"To kill each other?" he asked, thinking now that she was calmer, the best thing would be to smile it out of her—whatever it might be.

"Yes," she said, and her face did not change.

"Like they used to say in the old days in the West about those ancient pistols," he went on, watching her and just as serious as she was, "—that the derringer made all men the same height."

"This does more than that," she answered.

"It makes women just as tall as men, and just as strong. It's the only thing I ever heard of that will give a woman an equal chance with a man."

"What is it?" Schmaar asked her a little impatiently.

"Go on."

"Will you give it to me—the chance?" she insisted. "Will you promise?"

"I guess so. Yes," he promised. "What is it?"

HER eyes were growing bright and staring again. He must still keep her in hand, he decided, and jolly her along.

"It's simple—terribly simple," she said. "All you have to do is to draw lots."

"Or cut cards!" John Schmaar added with a little jump, for he saw now, what she had probably got hold of!

"Yes."

"To see who'll kill themselves?"

"Yes," she answered, still staring at him.

He stopped—staring somewhat himself. He thought at first he would burst out laughing, that he couldn't help himself, watching her—that light thing, with about the courage and will-power of a butterfly, proposing that deadliest of all tests of courage—that chance at death, in cold blood, which the nerviest of fighters have qualms about. He almost laughed in her face. As it was, all that prevented, probably, was

his memory of the time he had witnessed one of those contests—that little crooked-legged gambler dusting off his shining shoes with his silk handkerchief, and smiling, and the big "red neck" starting out the door to finish himself—the look on both their faces!

"Where did you get that idea?" he asked her finally. "Who put that into your head?"

"Oh—I got it," she answered, dodging him—and going right back to the point again. "Will you do it—will you give me my equal chance?"

He knew he would have to humor her. He didn't want a scene.

"You want to kill me, huh?" he said, keeping his face straight—thinking of course he could bring her around, show her the absurdity of it, finally. Memory of that time he had really seen the thing she was talking of kept coming back to him.

"I want an even chance too," she answered, her mouth snapping closed after she said it.

THERE was a change in her—Schmaar had to admit it to himself—in her face and in her manner! In some ways, one wouldn't have said it was the same girl. Hysteria, of course.

"Why?" he asked her. "What would you get out of it, if you did kill me?"

"You dead!" she replied blankly.

"Can you beat them?" thought Schmaar to himself, studying her. Here was this soft, pretty, luxury-loving little waster, afraid of every street-corner without a policeman on it. A fool boy comes along from nowhere and tells her what he thinks she is, and what she'll do—feeds her moonshine; and nothing will do but she must become just what he tells her she is, right off. She must become a heroine, braving the most terrible of deaths.

"That's nice," he said, smiling, and yet a little impatient too, as he saw how the thing was going. "That would be nice, killing me off! But what then—what good would that do you afterwards?"

Then he remembered. It would save *him*—save *him*! There would be a chance for him, with Schmaar dead. He had admitted that himself!

He had to smile inside. She was out to save Gladden—to save him! She was the real little heroine. And all the time that other thing—that she was talking about without the slightest realization of what it meant—kept coming back to him as she prattled on, that thing he had seen when he was a boy, that game of death between the little crippled gambler and the big rough-neck murderer.

"So that's all," he said at last. "You just want to save *him*—and kill *me*! But now suppose the other thing!"

"What other thing?"

"Suppose the cut of the cards should go against you?"

Oh, that was all right, too. What was there to live for—after it all came out—after Gladden knew what she had done?

"Oh, why not live a little longer?" he chanced. "Why not take a chance at it, anyhow?"

How *could* she live now—without money? She'd starve to death—even if she wanted to live!

"Why not take a chance at what I offer," he asked, studying her, "of coming with me?"

No. No. She'd rather die—a thousand thousand times!

He saw of course that it was no use—yet. When they get that way, he assured himself, you just can't talk with them; you've got to let them run on, till they're over it.

"I see," said Schmaar.

"And anyhow I'd have a chance—a chance to kill you! To put a man like you out of the world!"

"That would be fine, wouldn't it?" Schmaar replied. "But you didn't think that awhile ago."

"I do now," she snapped.

He kept wondering just how much he had that Gladden to thank for all this, whether or not he had put this idea into her head. He was angry; he wasn't feeling so friendly toward her as he had. But he hadn't changed his mind about her really. He never saw her look better. They are apt to, when they start to fight, he reminded himself.

"No," she said, "no. You are going to give me my chance—just as you would a man!" She was becoming excited again, and he saw he would have to go along with her, a little farther.

"Let's look at it closer, first," he told her.

"You will!" she cried—getting a little wild again. "You will do it! Unless you are too big a coward."

Schmaar's smile dried up a little on his face. There was one word he had never been accustomed to take—from anybody.

"Ah-hah!" he said, his voice changing slightly. "But how'll we do it? Have you got that all planned out too? I never thought much of shooting; it's too messy. I never cared for taking poison, either, much. Have you thought that out?" he asked her.

But not a response—not a smile. She didn't care how it was. Anything for her!

"And another thing: you wouldn't want a scandal, would you?" he asked, keeping on. "That is, if you could avoid it?"

No. No. She thought not.

"Just a plain suicide," he suggested to her, "even, might cause talk—which would be just what you wouldn't want, or I either. Or maybe you haven't got it planned so far as that?"

Well, yes, that was right, too.

"And another thing," he went on: "you've got to remember there are laws against dueling—death in some States! I don't know how it is in this. And you wouldn't want that to happen—you wouldn't want the winner to be killed off too."

No. She understood that. Still deadly serious.

"How would you fix that?" he asked.

He could see all the time—one reason that she couldn't smile—her mind was going round and round still, like a squirrel in a cage. Yet now, she found an answer for him.

"You remember that offer you made yesterday—to all of us—about that Lovers' Leap?"

He nodded.

"Well—if I should be found—there—at the bottom—"

There she was again, back to yesterday. And yet after all, the idea wasn't so bad—hitching up that way with the crazy dare he had made them.

"But what about me?" Schmaar said, putting it up to her again. "If they found *me* down there?"

"Well," she answered, a little bit flurried, "that could be an accident—you might have slipped."

"I might just naturally go out and—step off into five hundred feet of moonlight for exercise?" he asked.

"Or we could do this," she said, hurrying, bringing out something—bound to answer him some way: "We could just say we got talking about it again—and we made a bet about doing it, making that jump—understanding, of course, between us—you and me—that we would never make it! The loser, I mean!" she said, looking at him, a little breathless.

"I see," he returned, keeping his face straight.

"Then there couldn't be any question, anyway—about any—any duel—any killing of each other," she was saying. "It would just go back to that dispute we had yesterday."

"So the plan is this, is it?" said Schmaar, making a last attempt to make clear to her the absurdity of it all. "Let's see if I get it right: Summing it all up, your idea is that we'll cut the cards—on the bet that the loser takes the Lovers' Leap—that first one. Must try it! That's the way it will listen to the outside public. But instead, what will really happen—the loser will walk out, when he's ready, and just step off over the cliff into five hundred feet of moonshine. And they'll find him there in the morning."

She didn't smile. She just sat there with her eyes on his face and nodded.

It was too much for John Schmaar, finally. He burst out laughing. He had to.

"That's the best," he said, "that I ever heard."

She didn't change a feature.

"Wake up," he said to her. "Wake up! You are talking in your sleep!"

But instead of smiling, she passed him that old fighting word. "Are you too much of a coward?" she said to him.

His smile died out again. He was getting tired of that. It was like the crying of a child shut up in a room with you. Enough is enough. You can reason and reason with yourself that it's nothing. But after a while you can't stand it.

"You'll do it," she told him, without the quiver of an eyelash. "You'll do it before you're through. I'll make you!"

He looked at her—and got hold of himself again. Saw how silly he himself was, to let that one word from her affect him so.

"Or, I'll—I'll kill you, somehow," she said to him calmly. "Myself! Somehow I'll kill you!"

IT was close to dinner-time; and the other women were likely to come down any moment—his sister and the two other girls. He saw he hadn't made any headway toward breaking her up, yet. And he would have to do something—get somewhere—with her. So he thought he'd try a new tack.

"So you think you could go through with that?" he said to her, serious again. And he went on and told her the story with all details, of that thing he had seen in the old days in that old gambling-house in the West—that fight by cutting the cards between the crippled gambler and the gunman.

"He never carried a gun," he explained to her. "They generally knew it—let him alone, knowing he was a cripple. But that wouldn't do for the other man. He just had to kill off one more!"

John Schmaar could see them still—their faces through the cigar-smoke, twenty years ago—as he told it to her.



"You'd have thought, to hear her, when she was coming to, that it was her last night on earth!"

"He had to have it!" he went on. "So the cripple looked him up and down and said—why not? And made this proposition of yours about the cards—because he hadn't any other way of fighting."

"Exactly. Yes," she said, breaking in.

In memory now Schmaar could see the murderer's face change as they held him back—him and his gun—when the proposition was made him, and realized he would have to take it up. He had had a lot of wrinkles—parallel wrinkles across his forehead. They turned a bright red.

"All right, how'll we do it?" he had said, putting up his gun—trying to act easy.

"We'll cut the cards," the little cold-faced one had replied, looking up at him—with an eye like a snake's. "And then you'll cut your throat!"

"You will, you mean!" the gunman had said.

"Does that go?" the cripple had asked him.

"Sure!" the other one had swaggered. "Let her go." But his face turned white and shiny.

"How soon?" the gambler had asked.

And they made it within forty-eight hours—to give them both time to settle their affairs.

"All right," the big rough-neck murderer had said. "We're off!"

Then they had cut the cards. John Schmaar could see them now! The red-neck first, his big shaking hand—the sweat that rose and stood on the parallel ridges of his forehead—the look of nausea that came—when he cut a jack!

He saw the sleek-haired, snake-eyed, still-faced cripple cut. His right eyelid twitched as he did it. A ten-spot!

He could hear, as he told her of it, the gunman's heavy boot heels clatter as he



"That's when they say good night to each other, both looking at it, from their own rooms."

turned in the silence of the breathless roomful—speaking finally:

"God! Cut my own throat—like a pig's!"

That was all he said. Then he went out—everybody standing to one side for him, silent.

"Did he do it?" the girl asked, not a quiver in her face. John Schmaar wouldn't have believed it, knowing the kind she was.

"Did he?" he said, disgusted at himself, for not having made the impression he was after. "He did not. He was drowned later, in a river in Alaska—taking too big a chance. But he ran away—from that thing—as fast as his feet would carry him."

"He was a coward, then," she said, "really."

"You wouldn't be calling him that so much," he informed her, a little snarl in his voice, "—not if you had been around in those days. He had killed half a dozen men in fair fights. But going out into the dark, by yourself, and carrying it through in cold blood—that's different! It isn't done, that's all—very often—even by the best of them!"

"He was a coward; that's all," she kept on.

"You're pretty free with that word, aren't you?" said Schmaar, irritated in spite of himself—knowing just how imbecile it was, but reasoning on just the same, as one does with an insistent child.

"You want to know why I don't do this thing you're crying about?" he asked her. "In the first place, because I'm not an idiot, and in the second—" He broke off. "Stand up! I'll show you the second reason."

There came a change in the situation now, but not precisely the change John Schmaar had calculated on.

"Stand up," he said. And she did. There was a mirror back of her—a big one.

"Now turn around," he told her. And she did.

"That's the reason right there!" he said, taking her arm—watching his own reflection in the mirror.

"What?"

"This!" he said, pushing her forward toward the glass.

She said nothing.

"You want me to bet my life with you—that was your idea, wasn't it, stripped down to its bones?"

She didn't move, stood staring at his image in the mirror.

"I'd be likely to—bet my life—with *that*!" he said. His laugh was rather short and not very humorous. "Especially after I've seen once just how good it is at cliff-jumping."

There was not a smile—not the least let-down from the girl's same deadly serious look.

"So *that's* the excuse!" she said finally.

"Ah-hah!" Schmaar answered. But as he said it, he raised his head and looked around. He heard the sound he had been waiting for, the closing of a bedroom door above.

"That's your excuse—that I'm a coward! That won't do!" she said, still not smiling at all—not even seeming to remember about herself at all. "That won't go—not now. And I'll show you that, before I'm done."

"Wake up. Have some sense!" he said to her, turning and listening to the women's voices in the upper hall.

"You'll give me my chance," she declared simply, "because I'll make you."

"You'll make me, huh?" he returned.

"Or I'll show up to everybody—what you are—a *coward*!"

John Schmaar's eyes narrowed a trifle. He was deadly tired of this easy use of that word by her. "You might have to have a little lesson," he said to himself, "if you keep on—really to show you what you're talking about!"

"All right," he challenged her, "show ahead!" To be sure, she might make a scene—in spite of him. But if it had to be, all right, let it come. He could stand it—if *she* could.

"All right," he repeated. "But now, if you've got any sense left, quit, for the time. Forget it. Powder your nose. We'll talk further about it later."

He left her and went into the living-room—to meet the others. He knew then there was something ahead of him, probably.

CHAPTER V

THE two others—the Hunter and Bannerman girls—came into the big room from the hall, laughing. John Schmaar's old-maid sister, who kept house for him and furnished respectability, came in after them silently, with her eyes cast down as usual.

The two men, the automatic Captain Armitage and the Westerner, had not yet arrived.

"What are you two plotting here by yourselves?" called the Bannerman girl in her loud voice. "An elopement?"

"He's telling her all about the (Continued on page 135)

Hereditry?

By Mary Synon

Illustrated by
H. Weston Taylor

WHEN Mabel Lord ran away with the man from Lexington who had bought the Belcourt horses, she left to her husband a sheaf of debts, a bitter memory and a three-year-old girl. Carlton Lord, weak brother that he was, liquidated debts and memory by an overdose of morphine, taking the hurdles of death to some probable bourne of wifeless oblivion, while Dixie, the baby, played on the floor of the cheap boarding-house in Louisville that had been one of the reasons why her mother had broken the most important, socially, of the Ten Commandments.

There "Umbrella" Briggs, summoned by Burley, "the Deacon," at news of Lord's suicide, found her. He stared at her curiously while she sobbed in frightened loneliness. When she lifted her arms to the little middle-aged man, ignoring the tall, solemn, almost equally helpless Deacon, Briggs set down the big cotton sunshade that he always bore and that had won him the name by which the race-tracks of the Kentucky circuit knew him, and picked up the weeping girl-child.

"Come to your uncle, Baby," he said, and cuddled in his unaccustomed arms the bit of driftwood that a woman's passion and a man's futility had cast upon the tide.

"What will you do with her?" the Deacon asked, assuming, as usual, that action would come from Briggs, for he had traveled the paddocks with Umbrella for many a year before they had known, and despised, and pitied Lord.

"Keep her," said Umbrella.

"But your wife might not—"

"My wife," Umbrella declared with the vast dignity he saved for protests to judges after race decisions he thought unfair, unfit, unconstitutional and ungentlemanly, "will welcome her."

The Deacon, knowing Mrs. Briggs, chuckled, even in the face of death, as he strove to picture the warmth of greeting that Anna Marie would give her husband's protégée. Anna Marie, born Culbertson, in Bardstown, and married to Briggs in some inexplicably mad period of youth, had remained, for all Umbrella's fluid way of life and philosophy of living, as righteous, as rigid and as redoubtable as the Deacon looked when he was trying to sell a broken-down horse. Cassius Clay—she always gave her consort his full name, to his utter disgust—might flirt with the powers of evil in the clubhouses, on the grandstands, at the Pari-Mutuel windows. He might win and lose modest fortunes by faith in blue-grass products. He might even bring to the big house in St. John's Place, cannily bought in her name, the boon companions of his racing crowd. Anna Marie acknowledged their presence with the formality due to guests and the tradition of the Bardstown Culbertsons: but never, in the decades of her marriage, had she set foot on a race-course.

Year after year the city might bloom into the brilliancy of a Derby. Year after year Anna Marie's neighbors might frequent the Churchill Downs veranda, gossiping between races as casually



She rushed away, seeking
refuge in the cloister of
the linen-closet.

as at card-parties. Year after year Umbrella Briggs might live by and near and for the thrills of horses and riders, handbooks and gamblers, gains and losses. Anna Marie, growing old in solitary rectitude, boasted with pride that she was a woman in Israel keeping faith in Babylon.

The Deacon, admirer of her manner rather than of her stern morality, pondered upon Mrs. Briggs' probable reception of Umbrella's new and wildest vagary. "You always were a brave man," he told Cassius Clay.

"I always aim to be," said Umbrella.

It took all the courage he had vaunted, however, to break to Anna Marie the news that he had brought home Carlton Lord's child. He had put the baby down on the old-fashioned, slippery horsehair sofa in the high-ceilinged, austere parlor, and had sought out his wife in her no less severe sitting-room. Anna Marie was knitting. The click of her shining needles reminded Umbrella of those ladies of the Terror who had made scarfs and history, and he began to think of his chair as a tumbrel and his confession as the guillotine. "I've been thinking," he began with intended diplomacy, "that you must get pretty lonesome here in this big house when I'm away."

Anna Marie put down her knitting and gazed at him with a suspicion born of years of marriage to him. "What do you want to do?" she asked. "Sell the house, or bring in Mr. Burley to board?"

"Neither," said Umbrella with the relief of escape. He viewed from several angles the problem of informing her of the intention he had formulated. Finally he chose the narrative.

"Do you remember Carlton Lord?" he began. "His mother was one of the Bowling Green Carltons. She went down to the Visitation at Georgetown with my Aunt Sophie."

"What's he done?" asked Anna Marie. "Embezzled?"

"He's dead."

"Carlton Lord?" she puzzled. "I don't believe I remember—Why, he's the man whose wife ran away two or three weeks ago with— What did you have to do with him?"

"He left a little baby. She's the nicest baby I ever saw, really. She's as friendly as a puppy. She can't be more than a couple of years old, and she—well, she was there all alone, and the Lords are all dead and gone, and—"

"And what?" The voice of God rolled through Anna Marie.

"She's downstairs."

"Here?" Mrs. Briggs' voice lifted in horror. Her body followed it, towering over Umbrella. "That woman's child in my house? It's preposterous, Cassius Clay; it's unthinkable."

"And she's going to stay," said Umbrella.

In his voice rang a timbre of purpose that Anna Marie knew full well. For an instant, however, in spite of her knowledge of its futility, she thought to vent her rage against his decision. Second thought veered her course. Out of some wifely cupboard she brought a weapon of his own fashioning.

"You know better than I do," she said, "what children of such parents come to."

Word for word, phrase for phrase, she jabbed into him his own pet arguments, for, if Umbrella Briggs had a hobby, that hobby was the study of equine manifestations of heredity. Hour after hour, night after night, week after week, year after year, he had dilated upon the theme. "It's blood that tells," was his doctrine, and he backed it on race after race, believing in it whether he won or whether he lost. Too long had Anna Marie lived with the argument to forget it now. In all its potency, reinforced by his own precious anecdotes, the wife of his bosom served to Umbrella Briggs the cream of his creed. No professor of eugenics ever made better case.

Hoist on his own petard, Umbrella went down in defeat. "All right," he said, and descended to the parlor, where Dixie Lord slumbered in slippery discomfort.

Five minutes later, with the baby in his arms, he went back to Anna Marie's room. Standing at the door, he began to swear. Somewhere on a Yankee whaler or in a Texas cow-town there may be a man who can swear with greater potency than Umbrella Briggs. The prophet Jeremiah could not, if his written words do him justice. The Websters, neither Daniel drunk nor Noah sober, ever equaled his vocabulary. No other man on the circuits could fling out the magnificent pyrotechnics of profanity that the little man with the big umbrella juggled. The fame of his art, sweeping round in a circle, had come even to Anna Marie; but never before, in the twenty-two years of their life together, had she heard him lift his voice in a curse. Now, appalled, horrified beyond protest, she rushed away from him, seeking refuge in the cloister of the linen-closet. Umbrella Briggs put Dixie Lord down on the bed. "I said you were going to stay," he muttered, the tide of his rage receding by its own force of gravity, "and, by Heaven, you are!"

Anna Marie, because she really loved her husband, —how else could she have dwelt with him in the tents of Kedar?—crept back to the room after he had stormed out of the house. She stood at the foot of the tall, canopied bed with the pineapple carving on its thick mahogany posts, and looked down at the crumpled baby. Not the sight of tear-marks on the reddened cheeks, but thought of the pathos of Umbrella Briggs, fighting for this waif because he had no child of his own, brought a tearing ache to the woman's heart. Her hands fluttered toward the waking Dixie. "Get up," Anna Marie bade her, "and I'll give you a bath."

"Don't want a bath," Dixie said.

Anna Marie studied her a moment as she was wont to examine new patterns in crochet. Then she reached over and tucked the protesting child under her arm. She had her own ceremony of adoption, and it began with the rite of cleansing Mabel Lord's baby. Umbrella, sneaking back into the house a little later, heard the struggles of the ablution. He grinned, though sheepishly, and set forth to find the Deacon. At the bar of the old Galt House they drank potatoes to Dixie's future. They also drank to Anna Marie. Then they went to buy flowers for Carlton Lord's funeral.

WITH all the easy adjustability of childhood, Dixie Lord came out of her bath a full-fledged member of the household, assuming an adoption of it rather than permitting it to adopt her. Before Umbrella returned, she had dubbed Anna Marie "Auntie" and had established massive Henrietta, the coal-black cook, and dapper Janie, the chocolate-brown maid, as her retinue. From cellar to garret she explored the big house, growing wide-eyed in her wonder of its treasures of conch-shells and bead-work, and laying bare, in the naive way of children, its contrasts with the shoddy shelters that had housed her father and mother.

"Will Heaven be like this?" she asked Anna Marie after an examination of the chintz-draped guest-room.

"Certainly not," Anna Marie said sternly. "Heaven will be—"

"Then I don't want to go to Heaven," she announced grimly, "and I hope my father hasn't gone there."

Something in the child's sturdy individualism struck an answering chord in the woman's spirit, but the fear that it might come from an inheritance of heterodoxy rather than from a glimmer of orthodox honesty twanged the thought into a danger signal. She was delivering a dissertation on future states when Umbrella came up the stairs.

With a wild little cry of delight Dixie flung herself across the hall and into his arms. He tried to put down the quiver that he knew would rise to his voice. "Are you going to be a good little girl, Dixie?" was all he could think to say.

"You bet," she said earnestly.

"You mustn't say that," began Anna Marie. "Good little girls don't."

"You must do what she tells you," he hastened to say.

"All the time?"

"All the time."

"I will," she gave her promise. . . .

Through the years that went over the big house, the child strove to keep the promise to the best of her eager ability. She must have forgotten the fact of its making, but she realized, with the keenness of her almost unchildlike brain, that "Uncle" Cassius Clay wanted her to walk the path that "Aunt" Anna Marie paved for her. She did not love the stern taskmaster, but with all the passion of gratitude and idealization, she adored Umbrella. For his sake she would have walked upon hot plowshares. For his sake she made herself over as well as she could. If he had wanted her to become a Hottentot, she would have made the trial. Since



"Heredity? What's heredity got to do with you? With girls? With women?"



Unknowning its portent, she flung the bomb.
"Will you take me to the Derby this year,
Uncle Cassius?" she asked Umbrella.

he wished her to model her conduct on his wife's idea of what a child should be, Dixie Lord tried to make herself into a miniature copy of a Bardstown Culbertson. It is impossible, as Anna Marie had said on the night of Dixie's coming, to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but the child was doing her utmost to compass the miracle. "Am I a good little girl?" was her query to Anna Marie almost as often as she asked Umbrella: "Do you love me?"

If Dixie had been her own child, the woman might have allowed her some length of rope, trusting to the blood of Briggs and Culbertson to keep from coursing into wrong. The responsibility of raising Mabel Lord's daughter, however, weighed on her heavily, making her sterner, stricter, narrower with every passing day. She went to church as often, seeking guidance for her task and returning with new powers of such surveillance that Umbrella, observing the process, remarked to the Deacon: "Anna Marie's God must be a policeman."

"We'll be fortunate if our own judgment day isn't a Bertillon round-up," the Deacon told him.

Some trickle of Umbrella's tolerant philosophy must have seeped into the stream of Dixie's education, but to all intents and appearances, she grew into a girlhood as priggish as her foster-mother's had been. No more proper child dwelt in St. John's Place. No better-behaved girl went with more correct manners in the way that Mrs. Briggs pointed out for her.

There were times when Umbrella and the Deacon, remembering Mabel Lord, twinkled in mirthful appreciation of her daughter's amazing rectitude. Mrs. Briggs had decided against changing the girl's name, believing that too many people knew the story to make total concealment possible, but she did everything else to change Dixie into her idea of a proper juvenile. "Hitching a filly to a pony-cart," the Deacon appraised the process; but the hitching seemed to please Dixie as much as it engrossed Anna Marie.

Just as the older woman had limited her own childhood world with the sewing of fine seams, the making of cherry pies, and the observances of her religion, so did Dixie dwell within the same walls. So completely did she throw herself into the way of life that Anna Marie was satisfied, and Umbrella happy. But, "It's all right, if she doesn't smell the sawdust," the Deacon gave warning.

THE smel of the sawdust came, however, to Anna Marie before it reached Dixie. When the girl was eleven, a sprite of a child sleeked down into banded hair and decorous skirts, the successor to Janie announced to Mrs. Briggs the entrance of a woman who had insisted upon seeing her, although she would give no name.

"She don't look like no lady you'd know," said the dusky psychologist. "She don't look like no lady at all."

Curiously Anna Marie went down the stairs, to find on the very horsehair sofa that had initiated Dixie a woman who subtly justified the maid's description. She was not flashy; she was not loud; but she threatened fruition into flashiness and loudness. She jangled a little as she moved, and her perfume emanated insult as well as fragrance. Anna Marie knew that she was consciously modulating her voice when she said: "You're Mrs. Briggs, aren't you? Well, I'm Mrs. Lord; and I've come to you to talk about my little girl."

"You've been some time coming," Anna Marie said dryly. Her heart was pounding in tumult, and she prayed for Umbrella's presence, but she determined to hold her ground.

"That's neither here nor there, is it?" Mabel Lord inquired.

"Yes, it is," said Anna Marie. "What do you want?"

"I want to see Dixie."

"Do you want to take her away from us?"

"No." Her eyes appraised the Briggs parlor speculatively. "I may not do that—yet. I should like to see her, though. She's my child, you know," she burst out defiantly as she saw the light of battle rise in the other woman's eyes.

"Yes," said Anna Marie, "she's your child; and if you want to take her now, you can go to law, and win. You have the legal right to her, although you have lost the moral right, as I see it. But while she stays with me, you shall not see her."

"Then I shall go to law," said Mabel Lord, settling back on the sofa as well as she could in preparation for the preliminary bout of verbal wrangle.

Anna Marie arose. "I am very busy today," she said, "and if you will excuse me—" She bowed Mabel Lord out into St. John's Place, then went to bed with a nervous headache.

Umbrella, returning from the Downs where he had been superintending the shipment of one of his horses, found her ill but girded for war.

"Don't you worry," he told her. "She won't bring any action." And since there is such a process as benevolent blackmail, the benevolence being altogether in the object to be attained, Umbrella and the Deacon told themselves that they had justified the means by the end when Mabel Lord left Louisville, winging south with other birds of passage at the close of the meet, without having sought legal means to recover Dixie. But, "She's not dead yet," said the Deacon.

FOR eight years, however, Mabel Lord might have been dead, for all her life meant to the three in the old house. In that time Anna Marie aged into a hardness that made her seem like a withered crabapple. Her manners and customs, growing stiff in the joints, creaked in use, but she held to them with pertinacity, especially where they concerned Dixie. The sight of Mabel Lord had alarmed her into tenser vigilance, with the result that her care of the girl who was growing into womanhood was a watch rather than a ward. Umbrella, mellowing with every year, strove to palliate his wife's stern vigilance, even though Dixie accepted it as casually as food and air. "Colts will run," he told Anna Marie, but he let her fences stand.

Dixie, coming into the twenties, looked on the world and found it good. While she had none of the brilliant beauty that had been Mabel Lord's portion of youth, she had a charm that Anna Marie's puritanism had accentuated. In the little circle where she was permitted to move, she had popularity. Once a week through the winter she went to the Junior Guild dances, assemblies highly approved by the Louisville associates of the Bardstown Culbertsons. There she met boys and girls who looked through wider windows on life, but not until one winter melted into spring and the red-bud trees burst forth in bloom over the town did the light gossiping of hopes and plans of pleasure bear fruit.

One night at dinner, when April winds blew on the candle flames over the gleaming table, she flung, unknowing its portent, the bomb. "Will you take me to the Derby this year, Uncle Cassius?" she asked Umbrella.

He set down his glass of port, wiped his gray mustache, looked at Anna Marie, who sat rigid in attention, coughed, sipped the port again, and lapsed into silence.

"Everybody goes," Dixie went on. "Linny and Ella Louise and Bess can go this year. Cousin Marcia says they are old enough, and Bess is younger than I am. And you go always. Please, Uncle Cassius!"

"I never go," said Anna Marie.

"But didn't you ever go at all, Aunt Anna Marie? When you were nineteen, and Uncle Cassius wore top-boots and went every Saturday to Bardstown just to see you? Didn't you even go once?"

Truth never struggled long with Mrs. Briggs. "Yes," she said, "I went. I went twice, once when I was eighteen. I met you at the Downs, Cassius Clay." Her eyes grew soft, though her voice held steady. "I went again the year before we married." In spite of herself a little note of thrilled remembrance crept into her voice. No one born in Kentucky, follower of Oliver Cromwell though she may become, can quite condemn a Kentucky Derby, particularly when that Derby is remembered from youth to age.

"Then why can't I go?" Dixie begged.

Why couldn't she? How could they tell her, either of them, the old man who had found her or the old woman who had accepted her, that she had to be kept out of temptation because she was Mabel Lord's daughter? Umbrella scanned his wife's face with eyes not less pleading than Dixie's, eyes that asked a puzzled question. Why couldn't the girl go, just once? What harm could it do? Under their pathetic desire Anna Marie weakened. "If you will take care of her, Cassius Clay," she compromised.

"I will," promised Umbrella with radiant solemnity, while Dixie kissed him in dancing joy. "It's once in a lifetime," he justified their lapse from the determination to keep the girl from all association with the life that had been her mother's snare.

ONLY once in any lifetime could come the glory in which Dixie Lord exulted when the day of the Derby arrived. From early morning St. John's Place frothed with excitement. Every house visible from the windows was entertaining guests whose gayety effervesced out upon verandas and steps. Telephone bells pealed continuous summons. Motorcars dashed in and out of the street. Messenger-boys darted to and from the pillared mansion where dwelt the owner of Star Bright, the

Derby favorite and ewe lamb of Umbrella Briggs and the Deacon. Women fluttered from room to room of the homes, busy either in orders for the inevitable dinners that would follow the races, or in personal adornment for the event. Dress-boxes and hat-boxes and flower-boxes began to arrive, till the Place seemed embarked on one great festival. Only in the Briggs house decorous quiet remained; but even there Dixie's happiness overflowed. Laughing, chattering, singing, she spent the morning in excited sartorial preparations, descending upon Umbrella like a young whirlwind of old-fashioned flowers when he hurried out to keep his promise. "Isn't it wonderful?" she cried. "Isn't everything wonderful, Uncle Cassius?"

"It will be," he said, "if Star Bright wins."

"Isn't he sure to?"

"He ought to," he said gravely. "North Star was his father."

"Does that help?"

"Help?" He had been launched on his hobby since Star Bright had gone on the winter books. "It's all that counts, in the long run."

"Do you mean," she asked him, "that a horse can't win unless he's of a good family of horses?"

"There may be times when he won't win," said Umbrella, "but I'll play him against the field, every time."

"Oh!" she said, and a little cloud went across the face of the day's sunshine, for always in her had dwelt a tiny doubt of her own hidden heritage. It dissolved, however, when they swept into the stream of automobiles, of Stanhopes, of traps, of carts, of Victorias, of every sort of vehicle that swept out toward the Downs. It was quite long ere they came to the gates. With heart beating high in rapture Dixie Lord clung to the old man who, even on Derby Day, refused to part with that sword and shield of his personality, his great umbrella. The greetings to him flung from every side by all sorts and conditions of men, came to her like peans from the populace to royalty. "Does everyone know you?" she asked him.

"Some of them know me too well," he laughed.

HE led her to the box seats, the best that money could buy. His hopes that Star Bright would win and her joy at sight of the spectacle that unrolled before them more than repaid him for his extravagance. "Oh," she cried, her eyes gleaming like sapphires as she gazed on the green of the oval, the dusty topaz of the track, the blue of the hills along the Ohio, the kaleidoscopic brilliancy of the gowns of the myriad women in grandstand, clubhouse and field, "it's what I've always wanted to see, but I never knew before that I wanted it!"

To them, before the first race, came the Deacon, filled, as ever, with auguries of ill. Star Bright, he feared, would lose. Belplaine was in great form.

"That—that mule!" Umbrella exploded, punctuating his wrath by poundings of the great parasol. "He won't make show. Those Belcourt horses always fall down in a tight place."

A woman in the next box turned her head and looked at him with hostile denial, evidently about to challenge his assertion; but her eyes narrowed as she came into apparent recognition of him, then went beyond him to Dixie. She put her hand over her mouth as if to keep back a cry. Then she took up her race-program, holding it upside down as Umbrella and the Deacon wrangled. The tension of her gaze caught Dixie's wandering glance, but could not hold it against the splendor of the unfolding drama; but never once, as the world wore on to sundown, did the woman take her look from the girl.

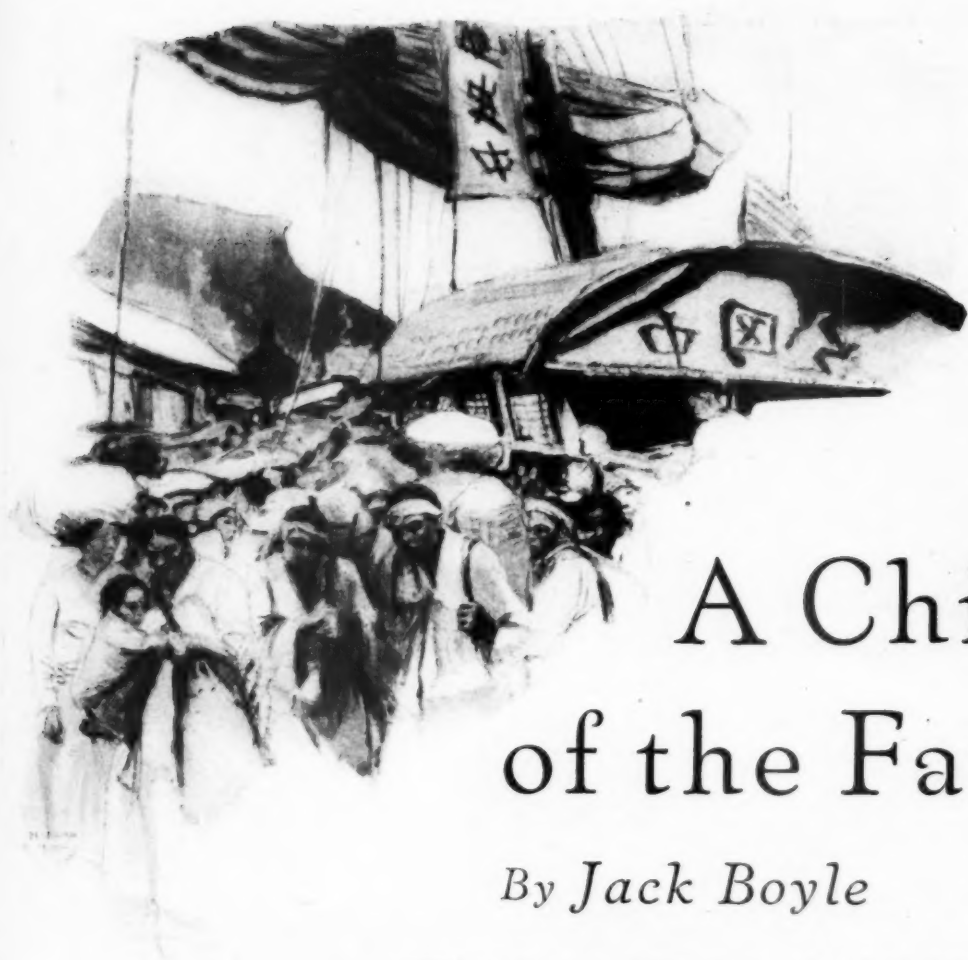
Umbrella, passing her on his way to the paddock, felt a flicker of remembrance concerning her, but it took the Deacon's keenness to ticket her. He pursed his lips up to a whistle, then took guard. Mabel Lord would have him for battler if she sought to speak to her daughter.

Too watchful of the one issue to heed others, he failed to note the crowd of men and girls who came to surround Dixie. Some of them he knew as the children with whom Dixie had grown up, girls of St. John's Place and their brothers and cousins and one-time playmates. But there were others among them whom the Deacon would have known even better, had he associated reputation with presence—men who, for all their youth, had gone ways that Umbrella and the Deacon knew only vicariously, men who commanded social entrance by reason of old family standing, but whom careful mothers kept outside the pale. One of them—and he was the one to whom Dixie turned oftener after he came to her that day—was Bruce Nowlan. And as he stood over the starry-eyed girl, the hands of the woman in the next box tore her program into shreds.

(Continued on page 107)



Star Bright came down the track first amid the fluttering of handkerchiefs . . . Umbrella Briggs led the Rebel yell.



A Child of the Famine

By Jack Boyle

Illustrated by
W. H. D. Koerner

THE shriveling hand of the great famine lay mercilessly upon the Middle Kingdom. Food was not to be had. One by one the crops—rice, maize and millet—that should have fed the hunger-ridden millions of the empire had withered and died in the drought. Men saw their children, their wives, their mothers and their fathers succumb, and thankfully blessed the gods, for with the passing of each, there was one less wailing voice to plead for food when, empty-handed, they returned at nightfall to their thatched hovels.

To such a home, without the rice he had sworn he would find that day, returned Quong Din, maker of shoes.

"Food?" questioned his wife, her hands clasped beseechingly as she raised her wasted form from the pallet on which she lay. "O my beloved lord, say thou hast brought food."

"None," answered Quong Din.

"Ai-ah! We die," she sobbed. "Assuredly we will die before the rising of a new day's sun."

Exhausted, she sank back upon her bed of grass mats. At day-break, when the moaning of his children dragged Quong Din back to reluctant consciousness, he saw the woman's prophecy had been fulfilled. Death had relieved her hunger. The maker of shoes raised himself on tottering limbs and looked down at the still form of the mother of his children. There was nothing of grief and but little of feeling in his dulled eyes.

"Kind are the gods," he muttered. "Because to his celestial arms, Ai-Lo-Hun, God of Beneficence, has taken her so swiftly, there will, perchance, remain an extra bowl of rice for the man-child who is the son of my body—an extra bowl of rice if, as our

elders promise, the grain barge of those who would feed us from their abundance appears this day upon the waters of the Grand Canal."

Though alien races may wonder in indignation at Din's whispered words, there was in them less of heartlessness than of the inbred Confucian philosophy which holds that only men-children are sacred.

Lo Ying, girl-child, lying with an unconscious sister clasped in her arms, heard and understood her father's words. Hatred, utterly at variance with the traditions of China's long centuries of male domination, seethed in her heart, though in years she was but a child. Her father was glad his wife was dead because, so, her bit of food might preserve the life of a boy-child! In famine-stricken China she was no more to her father than an extra and unwanted mouth that consumed food. The injustice of this man-made Chinese law of the ancient ages burned itself indelibly upon her childish brain. As she lay with little hands tight clenched and her arms about her sister's body, she knew how fiercely she hated men and their self-sufficient disregard of the women who had borne them. In that moment she registered the vow that thereafter charted her life.

"Men live for men," she whispered, so softly that her words were no more than the faintest breath. "Because of the words my father has spoken above the body of the mother whom I loved, I shall make other men pay; and in the pain I shall give while they pay, ah, yes, in that alone shall I find my life's happiness. So, now, do I swear it."

Late that afternoon, from the hundreds who watched at the mooring-place on the canal bank there arose a great shout—a shout of exultation verging upon madness. Around the bend where the canal curved from sight there appeared the prow of a barge, and piled high upon its low deck were sacks of food for

the thousand who starved in a single village. The priests in the Buddhist temple lighted punks and burned incense in honor of the gods who at last had deigned to grant relief. The populace on the canal bank, with heads humbly bowed and arms outstretched in unrestrainable eagerness, gave thanks in the intoned prayers of their faith.

The barge swung to its anchorage beside the bank. White men, and one woman, appeared from its covered cabin. A hundred weak but eager yellow arms helped carry the precious sacks ashore. And then, for the first time since the rising of the fifth moon of the new year, the dwellers in the village of Ning-Kiang felt their rice-baskets grow heavy with food. But because the great famine had cursed the land, north, south, east and west, and there were millions of stomachs begging succor, the portion of each was small.

Quong Din, with two girl-children and a boy to feed, received ten pounds. It might be months before another relief-barge appeared. Staggering homeward with his basket clutched against his breast, he debated the thought that grew upon him. To waste even a grain of his pittance upon unwelcome daughters would be a sacrilegious squandering of Heaven's bounty, he argued. Reluctantly he doled out a scant half-bowl of rice to each of his girls; his son's bowl he filled. As, grudgingly, he watched his famished daughters eat, his thought became a definite resolution.

During the night, as Lo Ying lay dozing upon her mats, Quong Din summoned the village *wu*-man, an astrologer and infallible adviser, for all men knew he spoke with the voice of the gods he served.

"The food that was given today by the *fan quai* white men through the mercy of our temple gods, preserves for a day, the life of the son of my house—but truly, it is very little," Din began, speaking with slow gravity as is befitting when men confer.

"Aye, my Brother of Much Wisdom, truly it is very little and must soon become nothing," the *wu*-man agreed.

"But the son of my name must live—live though all others die."

"Aye, so has it been written in the Sacred Book of Life."

As the girl, Lo Ying, stirred upon her bed, Quong Din's eyes fell upon her and became pin-points of mercilessness.

"Thou hast the secret of the Black Cup of Death, O All-wise Friend of Heaven," he said. "Bring me such a potion that, at sunrise, I may hold it to her lips and so fulfill the will of the gods."

"Even as thou hast spoken shall it be done. And my price shall be a single cup of thy rice. Cheap beyond understanding is my service."

"Not rice! Many copper cash?" suggested Din.

"Rice," corrected the *wu*-man.

Quong Din sighed and surrendered.

"The bargain is made," he agreed. "At sunrise, then."

The *wu*-man departed; Quong Din slept; but Lo Ying, who as before had heard and understood her father's words, slipped silently to the rice-pan that rested upon the brazier and ate bountifully of its precious store.

Then, carrying her little sister, she let herself out into the night.

When the relief-barge swung out into the stream an hour before sunrise, Lo Ying and the still sleeping sister lay upon it, hidden among the food-sacks. Two days passed before the white missionaries on the boat found them. Thus it happened that as none knew who they were or whence they came, the two girls were taken at last to far-away San Francisco, where they found a home and sanctuary from hunger in the Christian mission-house. There they were taught the alien religion of the white man's strangely unfamiliar God.

But always as she knelt dutifully before the mission altar, Lo Ying secretly repeated the vow first made in the little village of the Middle Kingdom:

"Men live for men. In suffering they shall pay me."

THE youth of Chinese girls is short. At twelve they are women; at

twenty they are aged. In her fourteenth year Lo Ying embarked upon the one great adventure life was to hold for her, the fulfillment of her vow made in babyhood.

The matron of the mission, summoning her one morning to the chapel, found Lo Ying's room empty. The girl and her younger sister, See Yet, had vanished. The white police failed to find even a trace of them. Months passed, and gradually, the mystery of their disappearance grew stale and was forgotten.



From behind the barred window of her room the Moon-flower watched, eyes agleam with eagerness.

During these months there appeared in the domain of Chinatown's too-bright lights a girl of beauty at which men marveled—a girl who became the reigning queen of the Chinese half-world. With her lived a sister less beautiful, but pure as a new-budded flower. The elder sister permitted neither gold nor soft words to desecrate the purity of the younger. The elder, men called Fire-flame because of what she was; the younger was named Moon-flower, also because of what she was.

In San Francisco's transplanted bit of China, where girls are chattels owned by men-masters who have bought them of their fathers, Fire-flame and Moon-flower were unique. They owned themselves. No man was more to Fire-flame than a thing to be intrigued, plundered and cast aside. To the Moon-flower no man had ever been anything. The fame of the two was on all men's tongues—the ruthlessness of the one, the sweetness of the other, constituted a magnet that drew men to their destruction.

The masters of the *tongs*—monarchs whose word is final law in Chinatown—grew to know that if by chance they required knowledge of a secret well hidden by a rival, the Fire-flame would secure and reveal it—always for a price. She was clever, keen-minded, intuitive and utterly conscienceless, for she betrayed those who bribed her to use her beauty in their behalf with the same smiling unfealty with which she served them.

Her house was the home of plot and counterplot that cost men their lives in the *tong* wars which are fought now with bullets on San Francisco's streets as they have been in China for centuries with hatchets. And when she summoned and fed a man she was sending to his death, the Fire-flame, always remembering the vow made above her dead mother's body, smiled into his face as he left her.

FOR two full moons the Hop Sings and Four Brothers, mightiest of rival *tongs*, had been at war. The quarrel, begun when a Hop Sing member disputed a gambling debt due a Four Brother, had cost a dozen lives. Neither *tong* could claim victory, nor even an advantage in the warfare.

In the sanctum of the Hop Sing *tong*-house Eye You sat in grave conference with the chiefs of his gunmen. Disaster threatened. Hop Sing spies had repeated their tale of twenty imported fighters hidden in the barricaded home of the Brothers. Inevitably such a force must overwhelm the already decimated ranks of the Hop Sings. Eye You stroked the gray beard that betokened the wisdom of age and pondered his problem.

"The honor of our sacred forefathers weighs heavily upon my shoulders," he reflected. "If now I fail them, always must they look down upon me in anger. The gods smile not upon us. The Dwellers of the Darkness rejoice in this, the hour of the Hop Sings' peril. But assuredly their joy shall become grief. How may it be done? A-h-h!"

In the word was revealed the birth of a new thought and a great purpose. For many minutes Eye You, with bowed head and unseeing eyes, probed the plan that had sprung full-fledged into a brain sharpened by the cunning of the Orient. His eyes burned with the flame of satisfied hatred as his racing mind gloated upon the surety of a coup that, if successful, would be lauded in *tong* history for decades.

"Now have the gods blessed me with wisdom. Now have my ancestors guided me from beyond the grave!" he cried. Then, turning to the first of his lieutenants: "Go thou, Wong Min, secretly but with speed, to the house where lives the Fire-flame of smiling lips and evil heart."

The old man withdrew a jade ring, priceless and beautiful, from his withered finger.

"This shalt thou give her from me as a symbol of the Hop

Sings' deep regard. Then, with words of suavity that woman's curiosity may not resist, hint cunningly to her of great deeds soon to be done in which she may share. All this shalt thou tell her, and having told, summon her here to my side. Through her beauty the accursed Four Brothers shall lament in the throes of bitterest grief."

"I go, Father of Wisdom," the gunman answered, and with deepest reverence departed on slippered feet that made no sound.

FROM behind the barred window of her room above the winding byway called Bartlett Alley the Moon-flower watched furtively, eyes agleam with eagerness. Many afternoons had she waited thus, for each day, undeviatingly, there passed through the alley a loiterer, handsome and of stalwart body, whose eyes as they sought the face that peered down from between the window-bars lighted in the vestal heart of the little Moon-flower the great joy of a never-before-experienced thrill. Shamed by her boldness in looking upon this stranger who wooed her so delicately, the girl hid her secret even from her sister. She feared men, but not this man. Deep within her heart something new and wondrous vibrated spontaneously to the love she read in his eyes.

As he passed on the afternoon upon which Eye You had plotted the downfall of the Four Brothers, the Fire-flame called to her sister.

"O beloved one, go thou to the shop of Sing Yun and buy therein for me the perfume of the lotus-flower," she said.



"Small is the price thou offerest, O Master!" she insisted.

The Fire-flame laughed—a hard laugh that echoed from a harder heart.

"Go, little sister, and buy for me the scent of flowers, that I may be beautiful tonight in the eyes of men," she added; and in the voice was that which would have chilled a listener's heart.

Trembling with the happiness of an audacity she would not have dared without the conscience-salving command of her sister, the Moon-flower stepped from her doorway and found the stranger so close beside her that her fluttering hands might have reached out and touched him. They looked into each other's eyes with no intervening bars now to shield their mutual confession of love. Involuntarily the man's hand reached out and touched hers. For the fragment of a second the girl's fingers, even more involuntarily, seized and held it. Then, precipitately, she fled from him. . . . When she returned with the perfume, both hoping and fearing that he still remained, he was gone.

The Moon-flower surrendered her purchase but lingered in hesitance beside her sister's couch. From a heart suddenly overflowing with love she tried many times to speak of the new

miracle within it, and failed. But necessity at last conquered reluctance.

"Sister," she asked, "why do we hate men?"

The Fire-flame sprang up with clenched hands and eyes ablaze. "Because they are—" A pause more eloquent than speech; then: "Because they are men," she repeated.

The Moon-flower sighed—a distressful sigh born of fresh heartache. For long minutes she was silent, and then again she spoke.

"May we not hate men, you and I, and yet among the world's millions find one, just one, my sister, who is not hateful?" she asked.

THE Fire-flame and Eye You were alone in the Hop Sings' innermost sanctum. Long had they talked, the man urging, the girl objecting with the dissembling skill of a shrewd bargainer intent upon her price.

But in her eyes even as she argued was the cruel joy of knowing the soul-compensating deed it would be her privilege to perform before the dawn of a new day.

"Small is the price thou offerest, O Master," she insisted. "Mighty and puissant are the Four Brothers. I cannot serve thee in this—not for thy price."

"But the ring of jade that already thou hast upon thy finger!" Eye You recalled protestingly.

"Already is that mine,"



"Mighty and puissant are the Four Brothers."

paid, I will serve thee. So paid, the clink of thy gold shall make my ears deaf to the old man's death-cry when the knife of thy killer cleaves to his heart. Otherwise—"

"Thy price shall be paid," the *tong* master conceded, sighing at his own words, for the price was great. He opened the money-chest of the *tong*, lighter now than ever before, and counted out upon the table the gold the girl demanded.

"Our bargain is complete," he announced. "Heed again my words; for if, having taken thy wage, thou darest to deceive or fail me, thy own life shall be thy reparation. Tonight thou shalt summon that one of great age but little wisdom who is the master of the Four Brothers. By cunning promises that thou plan to deliver me into his hands, thou shalt tempt him from the security of his *tong*-house. In thy rooms, well hidden, my most trusted killer shall wait, and in that moment when the chieftain of the Four Brothers plots with thee my death, then shall I achieve his. And as proof of the Hop Sings' greatest of triumphs, a cup of Four Brothers' blood shall be brought and offered upon the altar of the Hop Sings' beneficent gods."

she answered. "From thy *tong*'s overflowing coffers I ask, O Mighty One, a hundred pieces of *fan quai* gold. So

The Fire-flame poured the many gold-pieces into the money-bag she carried beneath her blouse.

"As thou hast commanded, so shall it be done," she promised,

studying treacherously as she spoke, the windows of the room in which they sat, in the hope that she might discover thereby a way to deliver Eye You also into the hands of his enemies.

HAPPINESS greater than she had ever before known sang within Fire-flame as she climbed the stairs to her room. Evening rice, prepared by the Moon-flower, was ready. Together the sisters ate; and as they ate, slowly, disturbingly, there penetrated to the Fire-flame's consciousness a faint comprehension that love saddened her sister's face.

"Art thou unhappy, little one?" she questioned anxiously.

"Aye, and the reason is beyond my understanding, for he by whom I am I—"

She checked her words and hid an abased head upon her arms to cover the shame she almost had avowed. At last the Fire-flame understood. Her cherished sister loved—loved one among those whom she herself had sworn to scourge from the earth.

"Never! Thou shalt not!" she screamed. Then, as her sister's sobs touched the well-springs of the only true affection she had ever known, she repented swiftly and laid a fond hand upon the bowed head before her.

"On the night our mother died, my sister, I swore to avenge myself upon all men, as thou knowest," she said; and for once tenderness, long suppressed, overcame hatred. "My vow shall be kept, but from it shall be excepted one—him whom thou lovest. Here, now, as the gods of the Sacred Temple listen, I swear I shall hold dear and cherish always the one who is thy heart's desire—even as I do thee."

As she rose with arms outstretched to embrace her sister, Eye You's gold clinked against her breast, and with the sound, the Fire-flame realized that the hour of her compact's fulfillment was at hand.

"Sleep now, beloved one," she urged, leading the Moon-flower with tender hands to her own room. (Continued on page 103)

Called on Account Of Darkness

By Gerald Beaumont

Illustrated by
J. J. Gould

AT the last instant Baldwin catapulted forward, turned a somersault and came up with the ball in one hand. The crowd yelled, and in the left-field bleachers a fight started. Thither toiled Pop Conlin, because he had a special star and a bamboo cane and was the paid preserver of the peace in Kids' Heaven.

"Ivory lad to his own place!" ordered Pop, and flailed away until he reached the bottom of the pile and Billy Winks.

"So, 'tis you!" grunted the Apostle of Law and Order. "Three times this week have you discommoded me; out you go!"

"They was riding Terry," panted the boy. "They said he could have caught it easy but he wanted to show off. Leggo my ear, Pop! Gee whiz, can't I stick up for a guy?"

Special Officer Conlin took this question under judicial consideration and then released his prisoner.

"The point is well taken, me son. On the promise of good behavior, the court will be merciful once more. Twenty-five years ago, do you mind?—but av course you don't! Well, I was once a devil of a man in the outfield, and there was them in the bleachers that stood up for Pat Conlin. God love thim, I had me friends! Will ye be still, now!"

He waved his stick, threatening such wholesale expulsion to cherubim and seraphim that a great hush descended upon the twelve-tiered throne of Kids' Heaven. Pop Conlin rolled back into the shade.

The inning ended, and Terry Baldwin trotted to the dugout to quench his thirst at the water-cooler. Up strolled Brick McGovern, soft of voice and quick of eye, and under cover of the upraised glass the manager spoke his mind on the subject of misjudging fly balls.

"One more like that, Mr. Baldwin," he warned, "and you come out of there!"

Now, there are sun and wind and tone-colors of the sky from which an outfielder may select his defense, but Baldwin said no word. He made his way to the plate, and having struck out, returned to sit among his comrades, offering no alibi for his performance in the field or at bat, which is a bad sign.

When the uniformed figure was once more on the green carpet just below him, Billy Winks wriggled to the railing and addressed the defendant vociferously.

"At's all right, Terry, old boy! These guys don't know a real ball-player when they see one."

Kids' Heaven yelled derisively, but Baldwin turned around and located his ten-year-old admirer. He grinned appreciatively, and when the game was over, tossed up a practice ball to Billy Winks.



Mary Malone, who worked at the fifteen-cent store and went three nights a week to Miller's Academy of Dramatic Art.

Thus are friendships fashioned. Billy Winks hung around the players' gate after the game until his idol emerged, when he presented a sporting extra and walked at Baldwin's side for several blocks, looking up as does a fox terrier, and quivering with delight as the outfielder kidded him.

A week of this, and then Baldwin turned up one morning at the park playground and undertook to show Billy Winks how to get away fast from the plate on a bunt, and how by touching second base with the left foot rather than the right, Ty Cobb found out he could pivot his body in a more direct line with the third cushion.

Billy Winks was very grateful. He introduced the ball-player to the playground contingent, regardless of age, class or color, and the outfielder responded so cheerfully that thereafter Kids' Heaven fought no more with Billy Winks but stood nobly behind the left fielder of the Wolves, recognizing him as pal and pattern and patron saint—a man who could do no wrong.

This master-stroke of statesmanship called for some recognition on Baldwin's part. He went one evening to a house in the Mission district where Billy Winks was boarded out by the Charities. There was a picture at the Central Theater entitled "Larruping Larry of Red River," and Baldwin had two tickets.

But Billy Winks was mindful of the courtesies. He introduced his hero to Mother Kearney and then to Mary Malone, who worked at the fifteen-cent store and went three nights a week to Professor Miller's Academy of Dramatic Art. Mary was only twenty and had a way of looking straight at people out of seal-brown eyes.

So the invitation was broadened, and the three visited the shrine of Celluloid Romance and were variously affected by the adventures of a gentlemanly bandit who eventually reformed.

Thereafter there was a Triple Alliance which observed Friday night with sacred punctuality, and discussed earnestly the respective merits of baseball, agriculture and the drama.

"Why, I think baseball is a wonderful profession for a man," said Mary Malone. "Think of all the people who know you, and read about you, and go to see you! And then it teaches



"So long as the game aint called on account of darkness, you're paid to get the ball. Got anything else to say?"

you to be so strong and fearless. Why, I can't think what possesses you to talk about a ranch!"

"A man can't stay in baseball only so long," argued Baldwin; "he's got to look ahead. For my part, I can't see the stage for a nice girl like you—knocking around with a lot of ham actors and never having no home or nothing."

"What do you think I ought to do?" she queried, and turned artless eyes on the screen.

"Oh, I dunno," he made answer, "only it seems like you ought to have a nice little home—an' kids; you're that kind of a girl. The stage is the bunk."

Billy Winks horned in on the discussion. "I betcha I land in the majors some day! I betcha I do."

The Triple Alliance agreed to that assertion unanimously.

After these weekly conferences they went home, the boy to dream of batting averages and a contract from Connie Mack, the girl to fashion her own scenario with Terry as co-star, and the man to lie awake between sheets that were damp with the sweat of his body and to wrestle with an exquisite fear that belongs not to one who has bludgeoned .300 in the majors and is but twenty-four.

There were many things about Terry Baldwin that puzzled fandom. Why should a man lead the American Association in hitting and fielding, set the majors on fire for two months and then blow up without apparent reason? And being returned to minor-league company, why should he be able to show only occasional flashes of the form that had sent a dozen scouts scrambling on his trail?

The supporters of the St. Clair club fully expected to see the Wolves measurably strengthened by the addition of Terry Baldwin. He might need a little more seasoning to stick in the big show, but there was no excuse for failure to star in the Coast League.

What Wolf fans beheld was a man who looked every inch a ball-player, but who was utterly undependable at the bat, and showed an increasing tendency in the field to play a fly ball deliberately so that he could pull hair-raising catches at the last moment.

That might go for Kids' Heaven, but not for the dyed-in-the-wool brethren, nor the astute gentry in the press-box; so the latter fell to calling him the "Ten-thousand-dollar Quince"—quince being the fruit of the *Cydonia Vulgaris*—too austere to be eaten uncooked (see Webster), and ten thousand dollars representing the price paid by Brick McGovern to find out that a baseball peach can sour overnight.

Truly such things are beyond the comprehension of anyone, because the answer is so exceedingly simple. Not even Billy Winks guessed that Terry Baldwin made those extraordinary catches because he couldn't correctly gauge a ball until it was on top of him, and that he struck out for the same reason.

But the Ten-thousand-dollar Quince had been aware for some time that gradually but none the less certainly *he was going blind!*

It was an insidious thing that crept upon Terry Baldwin, and he was a long time in recognizing it. When the average man becomes suspicious that there is something wrong with his eyes,

he goes to an office and sits in a chair and looks at very black figures first through one eye and then the other, responding to questions with a painful effort to be exact. Then he accepts his first glasses philosophically, and in a few days knows not the difference.

But not so the ball-player. He hides the secret from everyone, because no man can play ball in spectacles, and there is no other profession to which he is trained. He talks about the high atmosphere, and the air-currents, and the advertising signs on the fences that form no fit background for a line drive. And in the mornings, and on days when the team is traveling, he keeps his eyes closed as much as possible, hoping that Nature will come to his rescue, and that his manager will not be too observing.

Baldwin did all these things before the White Sox sent him to the Coast. He spent three days and nights on the train, with his eyelids lowered almost continually, but in the first game with the Wolves, a fly ball came to him, high and on the right, and he misjudged it badly, leaping backhanded at the last moment to make the catch.

"Circus stuff!" commented the bleachers. Baldwin encouraged that belief; it was as good an alibi as any other. He kept his own counsel, and strove to tune his ear to the crack of the bat and to interpret it fairly correctly.

He got his first hint always from the shortstop, who by virtue of his job is fast on his feet and moves instinctively after a fly ball, especially when it is in left field. Thus he was able to see the blurred line in the air, and experience told him the line would swerve sharply when the ball was near. That swerve was something he could not understand, but he learned to hold his muscles in readiness for a desperate final leap, and because he seldom ever dropped a ball that he could lay either hand on, he succeeded in postponing the inevitable.

But one night when the Triple Alliance was in the Crystal Palace, at Seventeenth and Mission, the ball-player placed one hand over his right eye and stared at the screen.

Mary Malone heard a startled exclamation at her side. "What's the matter?" she asked quickly. "Nothing," he answered, and was silent for the balance of the evening. When he reached the seclusion of his hotel room, he tried further experiments with the same result. He wondered how long the sight of his right eye had been gone, and how long the left eye would last. He was afraid to press the little button on the wall, for fear that when he pressed it again, he would be unable to tell the difference.



"All right," said Babe carelessly. "You can't hurt ivory."

Fully clothed, he lay on top of his bed, protesting that he was only twenty-four, and that all he wanted to do was to play ball—clean ball like he had always done—and that no one had a right to rule him out like that, *no One!*

"You're not on the level!" he mumbled. "You're not giving me a chance! I can't fight back. Give me my eyes, damn it. Give me my eyes!"

His brain grew hot and disordered. He told himself that he would fool them all. He would go on playing ball until they pulled him off the field by force. Billy Winks would never know, nor Mary Malone, nor anyone. If he couldn't play ball, he was not going to let anyone lead him around by the hand and teach him how to make baskets.

The next day it began to drizzle in the fifth inning, not hard enough to warrant suspension of play, but penetratingly wet and cold, so that the management opened up the grandstand to the bleacherites, who scrambled gratefully under cover.

The Quince looked in back of his position and saw Billy Winks shivering under a thin jacket, but sticking resolutely to his post. "Go on home," he counseled. "Aint you got an overcoat?"

The boy shook his head. "I aint so very c-cold," he chattered. "I'll wait until you b-bat again!"

Baldwin stole another uneasy look at the sole occupant of Kids' Heaven. As he did so, a bat cracked sharply.

A warning scream came from Billy Winks. "Look out, Terry!"

The outfielder whirled and sprang into action, bulging eyeballs turned to the dark sky. He saw no ball. The shortstop was racing out to take the throw, and the rest of Baldwin's team-mates were faced in his direction.

Cavanaugh, tearing over from center, shouted at him: "Back—go back—play the fence!"

On the instant Baldwin pivoted sharply and made for the bleacher wall with his head turned. He caught the line of the on-coming sphere and estimated it higher than it was. He was sprinting back with all the strength he could muster, when his body crashed full-tilt against the bleacher wall.

In a well of darkness the Quince crumpled up at the foot of Kids' Heaven, and the ball dented the turf at a spot which any outfielder should have reached easily.

They carried him to the clubhouse, and there was no soft patter of the applause by which fandom is wont to express its sympathy with an injured player.

"It was the Quince's own fault," argued the bleacherites; "there was just one kid left on the benches, and he had to turn around and talk to him. Can you beat it?"

But Billy Winks, wide-eyed and fear-stricken, hurried into the wet street and took up his post at the players' exit. There he remained, a shivering little spaniel, until Babe Durango, who had been thrown out of the game for crabbing, emerged in street attire.

"How's T-terry?" chattered the boy.

"All right," said Babe carelessly. "You can't hurt ivory. What's the matter, kid—sick?"

"N-no."

"Well, you better beat it home to your mother—you look it."

Billy Winks nodded and turned away. He would have liked very much to beat it home to Mother. That being im-

possible, he thought of Mary Malone. He liked her because she did not baby him, and because, too, she liked Terry Baldwin and would appreciate the terrible thing that had happened.

Thus two members, constituting a quorum of the Triple Alliance, went into executive session, leaving the third party to face Brick McGovern in the gloom of the ball-park office.

McGovern came to the point quickly. "What was the matter out there today?"

"It was pretty dark, Brick."

The manager grunted expressively. "We got two umpires out there to rule on that point," he reminded. "So long as the game aint called on account of darkness, you're paid to get the ball. Got anything else to say?"

"No, Brick—only it was pretty dark."

"And yet you turned your back on the plate to talk to a kid. I was watching you. Tomorrow you play the bench and I'll ask for waivers. It may not be quite so dark in the bushes."

"All right," said the Quince, and stumbled as his foot encountered the door-sill.

McGovern called him back sharply.

"Say, what's the matter with you?"

"Nothing."

Baldwin's eyes were crystal-clear, his muscular frame steady and upright.

McGovern's brows knitted. "Well, you ought to know," he concluded. "I guess that's all."

So the papers chronicled the passing of Terry Baldwin. They did not call him the Ten-thousand-dollar Quince, but elected to say nice things about him in the obituary notices so that he could land another job. Sporting editors appreciate that a man must eat. But the Quince did not eat, nor sleep, nor read the papers, nor seek advice. What was the use? It would be darker in the bushes than it had been in the Coast League. It was twilight over the whole world for the Quince, and night was fast descending.

TWO days passed, and then Mary Malone ran out of her house in the middle of the night with a shawl over her dark curls. She called Terry Baldwin on the telephone. "It's Billy," she panted. "He's awful sick and calling for you. Oh, please come quick!"

The Quince had other plans, but they were founded on the assumption that he was of no further use to anyone; so they collapsed, leaving in his mind only a sudden fear for Billy Winks.

Mary Malone met him at the door of the boarding-house. She impressed him as having attained sudden maturity and heightened beauty.

"The doctor is here," she said. "It's pneumonia and meningitis—inflammation of the brain. You may be able to help. Please come this way."

The Quince followed her into the little bedroom upstairs. A man of about forty, with tired eyes, arose from the edge of the bed. He had a stethoscope in his hands.

"Four times eight is sixty-eight," cried a small voice. "Terry—look out!"

The Quince turned a white face to the physician.

"Pneumonia," said the doctor. "The right lung is consolidated. Open all the windows as high as possible."

"Yes, Doctor." It was Mary Malone who spoke up and obeyed promptly.

"And some hot mustard applications."

"At once, Doctor."

The physician looked at her approvingly and then turned to the Quince, whose eyes were fixed on the little figure tossing restlessly on the cot. He penciled a prescription and gave it to Baldwin.

"You'll have to go downtown for that, but you'd better get it right away. It's pneumococci vaccine, and it will help."

The Quince went away and returned in a remarkably short time, having spent a five-dollar bill which he had carefully tucked away in his watch pocket. It was well that he returned when he did, for Billy Winks believed himself once more in the left-field bleachers.

"Look out, Terry," he moaned. "There it comes. Get it, old

boy! Oh, Terry—I didn't mean to. Yes ma'am—five sixes is thirty—no, thirty-five. Get it, Terry!"

The Quince approached the bed and took Billy Winks by the hand.

"I got it, Kid," he soothed. "It's in the old well for sure. Terry's got the old glove on it. Now, lay down, little feller."

"Five times six is thirty—you got it, Terry?"

"You bet I did, Kid. Made a swell catch. Everything's all right. Don't get up, Kid. Go to sleep."

"You goin' to sit up here with me, Terry? You goin' to catch the ball with me? You're not mad at me? Mary aint mad at me. Five times six—"

Mary Malone appeared at the bedside. "Let me have him a moment," she said quietly. In her hands she held a basin of tepid water and a sponge. "I'm going to bathe him. Don't go, Terry. You can quiet him."

The Quince drew a little to one side, and with the physician, watched the feminine member of the Triple Alliance unfolding in the age-old instinct of her sex.

"My name is Hilmer," whispered the physician. "If you don't mind, I think I had better stay here tonight. Nothing much to be done, though. It's a self-limited disease—nursing is everything. Splendid girl, that!"

Again the Quince was impressed with the lines of fatigue in the physician's face, and in the large, lustrous eyes. Hilmer's whole frame seemed to sag under clothes that were spotted and threadbare. Baldwin was vaguely uneasy.

Billy Winks dropped into a troubled sleep, and while the Doctor was busy

watching him, the Quince drew Mary Malone into the hallway.

"You're sure he's a good doctor?"

"I don't know," she answered. "He was in the drug-store when I rushed out to telephone, and he came right along with me. He seemed to know at a glance just what was wrong. He volunteered to stay all night."

"That's it," puzzled Baldwin. "They don't usually do that, do they? He looks kind of down and out to me—like he didn't have many patients. Maybe that's better than the other kind—he can give his whole attention to Billy. Mary, you don't think the little feller's going to—"

"Terry! Don't say it! Don't even think it! I don't go to church, Terry—but I just *know* there's Some One back of everything, and He isn't cruel!"

From behind the closed door rose the voice of Billy Winks: "I'm not so very cold. I want to see you bat again. Look out, Terry. . . . Oh, I didn't mean it. Oh, Terry!"

"You'd better go in and quiet him," advised the girl. "I'll make up the two lounges in the parlor. If anything is needed, call me at once."

Baldwin reëntered the room and approached the bed. At his



"That's it," puzzled Baldwin. "They don't usually do that, do they?"

reassuring voice the boy reached out a hot hand, and the Quince took it.

"Five times six— You guys don't know a real ball-player when you see one. He's no quince—take it back!"

"Easy!" soothed Baldwin. "Easy, little feller! Terry's got the ball—everybody's cheering, everything's all right. Go to sleep, Kid, go to sleep."

Ten minutes later the grip on Baldwin's hand relaxed, and he looked up to note Hilmer standing at the foot of the bed, his arms folded, and his eyes intently set on the invalid's face.

The Quince concluded that his early impression of the physician was faulty. The lines of fatigue were gone from Hilmer's face; his body no longer drooped. He stood erect and alert, with a carriage that suggested military training. Baldwin was puzzled.

The night dragged on, with the physician and the ball-player alternating at the bedside. In the morning Mary Malone came to them, her eyes clear and confident.

"Breakfast is ready downstairs," she announced. "After that, you are both to go to bed, and I will call you if necessary. That's right, isn't it, Doctor?"

"Exactly," he agreed gravely.

They went into Mother Kearney's small kitchen. Baldwin noticed that the physician took five spoonfuls of sugar in his coffee, and that he was again a man bowed down with an infinite fatigue.

In the days that followed, Hilmer became more than ever a man of mystery. He absented himself less and less from the little house wherein the Triple Alliance struggled against any sundering of the bonds. Sometimes he was masterfully serene and buoyant; more often he was bent with a weariness that seemed to tap his very soul. But after the first day there was no doubt that he knew his business, and that for some reason of his own the man was giving all that was in him to the task of saving Billy Winks.

"But what about you, Mary—your job?" questioned the Quince.

"This is my job now. Terry—the store can get along without me. But what about you?"

"Leave of absence," he explained slowly. "When the kid pulls through, when he doesn't need me any more, I—"

"Hush!" she whispered. "He's calling."

"At's the old boy, Terry! I'm pulling for you. I aint so very cold. . . . Oh, look out!"

The Quince bounded up the stairs, and once again resumed his place in the mythical game.

The seventh day came and brought no relief. The ninth and tenth day arrived, and still no crisis. Billy Winks did not talk any more. His temperature mounted to 104—105—and then 106. His pulse raced, and the respirations ran sixty a minute.

ON the morning of the eleventh day Hilmer shook his head. Billy Winks was very close to the real Kids' Heaven. "One way or the other very soon," whispered the physician. They had never seen him look so utterly devitalized. His gray face, the chin cupped in one hand, was turned thoughtfully toward the child's bed, and in the pupils of the eyes there was a hungry flame.

Mary Malone's hand sought Baldwin's. Through all the long days and nights neither courage nor trust had faltered, but she was young, and she loved Billy Winks.

"I just know He isn't cruel," she breathed. "Don't give up—anyone; come back to us, Billy! Oh, please!"

And in the gray of the morning Hilmer laid a hand on the boy's forehead, found it wet and noted that both the pulse and the respirations were steadier.

"Go to bed—you two," he beamed.

Daylight found Billy Winks very weak but with the fever receding and his small brain trying to bridge the gap of darkness. He looked up to find his two Allies bending over him.

"How many hits you get today, Terry?" he whispered.

The Quince quivered slightly. "I got a home run," he gulped, "clean into the left-field bleachers! Getting to be a regular fence-buster, I am! Aint I, Mary?"

Billy Winks transferred his attention to the girl's nodding head, and then put the next question with appalling directness.

"Are you two going to get married?"

"Why—Billy!" gasped Mary Malone. "Whatever put that idea—"

"I think it would be nice," he whispered.

The Quince reddened and then went very white. "I—I, you see, Billy," he stammered, "maybe sometime—"

Mary Malone shot a quick glance at Terry Baldwin and then busied herself with Billy Winks' pillow.

"Lie still, little man," she crooned. "You mustn't talk or think of anything right now. When you're well enough to go to the ball-park and see Terry play again, everything will be all right. Now go to sleep."

She darkened the room and signaled to the Quince to leave.

Outside he rallied his faculties in an effort to explain matters.

"Mary, I don't want you to think that I—that I—"

"Of course not," she interrupted quickly. "Billy isn't quite right yet. Please forget it. Anyway, I'm really crazy about the stage and—oh, there's the milkman, and we should have another pint of certified."

The Quince watched her flutter down the stairs, and he understood that the Triple Alliance had withstood one attack, only to face a harder one. He closed his right eye and nodded wisely as he noted that the blur was extending to the remaining member.

HE tiptoed lightly down the stairs, intent on retrieving his belongings from the little sitting-room. The door was unlatched, and he pushed it gently ajar. Hilmer had come in and was standing at the window with his back partly turned. Something in the physician's attitude induced the Quince to watch noiselessly until he understood what there was about the man that had mystified them.

Hilmer was slowly revolving a lighted match under a spoonful of liquid. When the match had burned its course, he laid it down, and picking up a hypodermic needle, drew the liquid up, guarding carefully against the malignant air-bubble. A moment later he had bared his wrist, straightened under the influence of the drug, and turning, observed Baldwin in the doorway.

"Ah, Baldwin," he said lightly, "you see the medical profession has its quinces too. First the majors, then the bushes—then morphine."

"I didn't mean to sneak in on you, Doc," apologized the Quince. "I was coming after my things. I'll say you're a real doctor, though—it seems kind of funny—that stuff; you ought to be hitting the ball."

Hilmer smiled a little ironically. "Perhaps I'm a trifle stale. When the war broke out, I was specializing in brain surgery under Dubouq in Paris. I spent two very messy years at the front, and for a rest they transferred me to relief work in Poland, where the children form in a line outside your tent; and though you don't stop to eat or sleep, the line is always there, always growing longer—and things happen that one tries to forget and can't. When it was over, I came back and found that my wife had—"

He stopped and shrugged.

"Passed out?" asked the Quince.

"No."

"Oh!"

"I suppose she just got tired of waiting," continued Hilmer evenly. "But there was a boy—just about the age of our little friend upstairs. He loved me—and he died. I've always thought I might have saved him had I been here instead of over there. That's why I stuck with this one. I'm glad it's through with. When morphine interferes with your practice, drop the practice."

"What does the stuff do to you?"

"Kids you along at first. If you're subnormal, it brings you up to par—for a while."

With the toe of one shoe the Quince drew a diamond on the carpet and frowned thoughtfully.

"I'm in trouble, Doc—I'm sure up against the real thing. Do you suppose a shot of that stuff would help me think a little clearer?"

"Forget it," admonished Hilmer. "You're crazy, man! With a girl like that waiting for you, and Billy to watch you play ball? All you need is a bit of sleep and a marriage license."

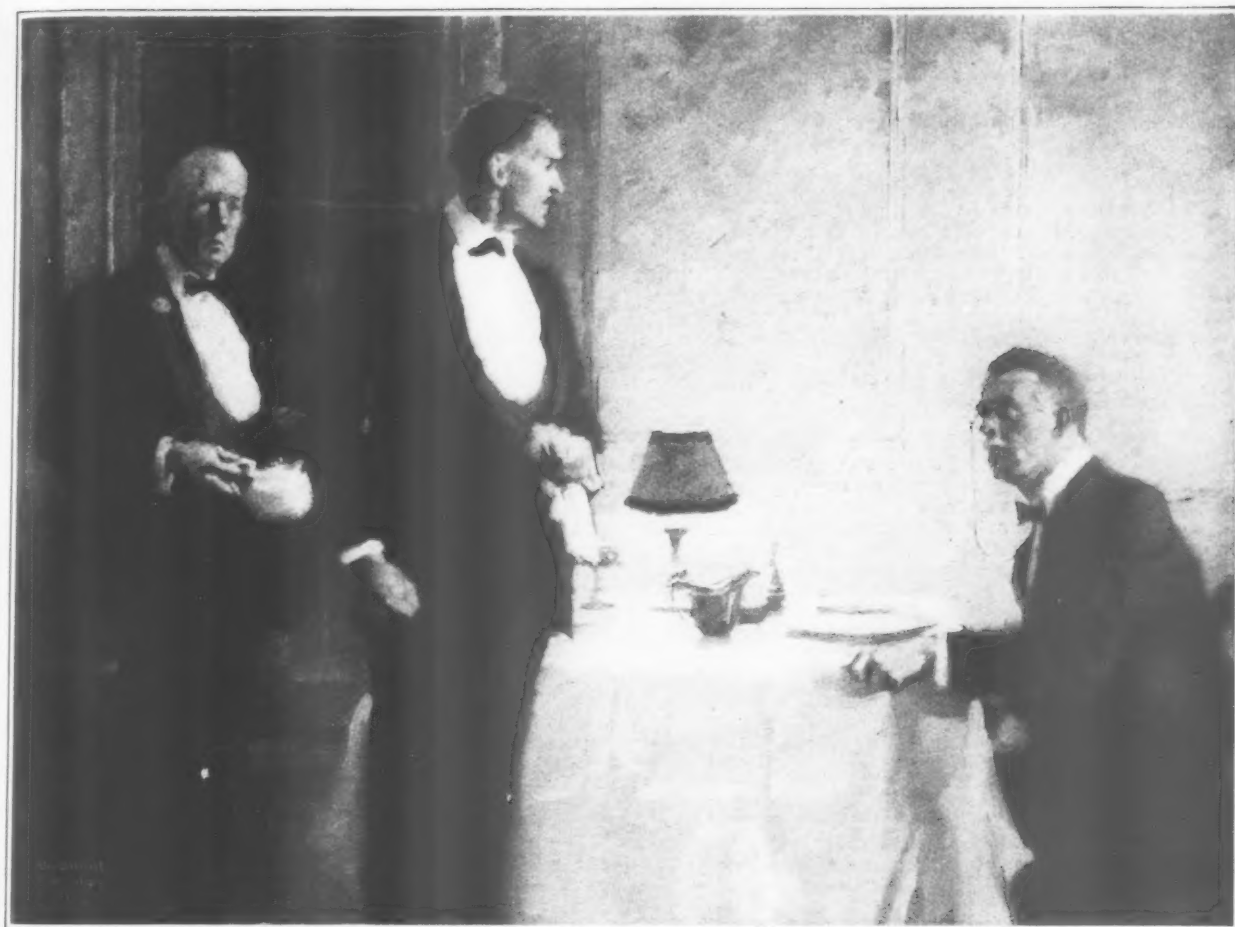
Something within the Quince gave way. He buried his head under shaking hands and sank into a chair.

"That's it, Doc," he moaned. "I can't sleep—I can't play ball—I can't marry. I'm going blind. It's been coming on for six months, and now it's got me!"

Hilmer walked over and locked the door. He came back and put his hands on Baldwin's head, forcing the latter's face up toward the light. "I suppose you never told anyone about it, either," he said. "You're almost as big a damn' fool as I am. Tell me all about it."

The Quince tried to define his symptoms, but they formed a rather disordered nightmare. Hilmer towed him to the window and instructed him to look at first one object and then the other.

(Continued on page 102)



"Oh, keep your place," he said. "There wont be any room for you at the other table."

Touching Pitch

By Perceval Gibbon

This is the story for which the public is to select 1001 titles. See full explanation on page 2 of this issue.

Illustrated by William Meade Prince

IT was a saying of Sir John Wotton's that the only man who could touch pitch and remain undefiled was the passenger by sea. By touching pitch, he seemed to mean nothing much more desperate than risking the soilure of one's social fingers by talking to people without a previous introduction; and he commonly went on to relate how he made each of his frequent journeys to the United States a small adventure, confined within water-tight bulkheads from slopping over into the decorous channels of his everyday life. For instance, he was wont to avoid the glaring ships which carry the actresses and the bishops and the special correspondents, and patronize the slower, sedater boats which transport only cattle and connoisseurs in travel.

"Most amazin' fellers you meet, sometimes," he would assure his hearers. "Interestin', too! Don't believe in too much exclusiveness myself, 'specially *ong voyage*. An' the best of it is,

you don't have to worry about droppin' 'em; they're dropped automatically when you land on the other side, exceptin'—well, sometimes!"

That "sometimes" had its origin upon the morning when the *Mimnehaha* was slicing her way across the tail of a half-gale within twenty-four hours of New York. Sir John Wotton, with the collar of his overcoat turned high and his tweed cap jammed low, paused in the lee door of the smoking-room to light his after-breakfast cigar. His handsome elderly face, with its gray mustache trim and decorative as a stage ambassador's, was pleasant and eupeptic; he looked what he was, a busy, wealthy man for whom life and its affairs were savory. A kind of humane worldliness was in his demeanor; there was not even the conventional contempt of the "good sailor" for the bad one as, drawing strongly upon his cigar to get it under way, he glanced round upon the three

or four limp folk who drooped in the swivel chairs. He knew them all—the black-bearded Mormon missionary, the small-college professor, the man who had invented a new typewriter, and so forth. He had enjoyed them in his own fashion; and in twenty-four hours they would be for him like the contents of a newspaper one has read and thrown away. With his cigar in order, he stepped out on deck.

The big boat was heading up to a strong and racing sea, blue-gray and abrupt, patterned with flying whitecaps; as he glanced across the rail, it seemed to boil past the ship's high side like a mill-stream. From the other side of the deck he heard the dash and spatter of wind-borne spray driving aboard like hail; and as her bow plunged, he saw the white of churned water rise about it in a snowy cloud. He lifted the cigar from his lips and breathed with relish of the cold salt air.

There was but one other figure in sight upon the length of the promenade-deck. Sir John recognized it, and balancing expertly against the roll of the ship, moved forward to where it stood beneath the spread of the bridge. It did not turn as he approached, but stood, one hand upon the forward rail, gazing out over the water. Sir John, debonair and hearty, placed himself alongside.

"Fine, fresh morning—what?" he said agreeably. "Wind's as good as a drink of champagne, eh?"

AS Sir John began to speak, the other turned with a small motion that might have been a start or an involuntary shrug. He was a tallish young man, with a comely, unremarkable face and a little smear of black mustache upon the upper lip. He might have been twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age; he was strongly bronzed; and the face he turned to Sir John's easy geniality had no trace of an answering smile. For the rest, he was dressed in the fashion of Sir John himself, well and inconspicuously, a figure merely conventional, decent and right.

"Good morning," he made answer now, and looked away again to the boisterous waters.

But if he intended a rebuff, he rebuffed in vain. As well threaten a duck with rain as fight Sir John with hints when he was in his pitch-touching mood. Several times since leaving Tilbury he had attempted conversation with this young man and been eluded, and there remained to him only twenty-four hours. He suspected that in this silent youth there was concealed a story that could be retold afterwards, and if the conversational corkscrew could extract it, he meant to have it out of him.

"We'll be in by this time tomorrow," said Sir John. "Always glad to see good old New York again. It's forgotten more than London ever knew about some things; but what I always say is—pity it's forgotten 'em so completely—what?"

He laughed; he had a pleasant, infectious laugh, but it did not infect the other. "No doubt," he replied.

"Got friends there?" persisted Sir John.

The young man removed his eyes from the distance and looked at his questioner. "I don't know," he answered distinctly.

"Really? Not a New Yorker, then? D'you know," confided Sir John, "I've an idea I've seen you before somewhere. You remind me of somebody; dashed if I can think who it is. Let me see, Mr.—er—" the other made no sound to help him—"I don't think I know your name," he concluded on a note of inquiry.

The other gave him back his look, the bleakness of the cheerless young face fronting the silken smoothness and suppleness of the elder one. A flash of reluctant humor slackened the light lips under the smudge of black mustache for the fraction of a moment.

"I'm dead certain you don't," he retorted.

There was not much left for Sir John to do after that save cover his retreat. He smiled complaisantly, spoke again of the freshness and invigoration of the wind, and then an inward-curling drive of spray came to his rescue.

"You'll get soaked if you stick there," he warned. "I'm for shelter. See you later, eh?"

"Sure," said the other, with his first approach to cordiality; and Sir John moved aft.

He went with no disturbance of his customary demeanor; his smiling good-nature was his armor and his weapon; and the calm that cutthroat rivals in the cotton-milling trade had never failed to disturb, was proof against any quantity of mere pitch. He stopped and spoke pleasantly to a wan woman, and a fat child of five or six, who were sheltered in the drawing-room doorway.

"Why, what's this?" he cried bluffly, bending to stroke the little boy's round cheek. "Hiding from the wind—a stout feller

like you! It's wind like this that blows everybody good, don't ye know! And don't you want to look over the rail an' see the sea go tearing past like a great big waterfall? Call yourself a sailor-boy."

THE child smiled up at him shyly. Sir John was admirable with children; he had himself an expensive son in the Guards and another at Eton. But then, of course, he was admirable with everybody.

"Waterfa?" repeated the child.

"Rather!" said Sir John. "Like a big, wet, roaring, rushing waterfall. You get your mother to show you."

The wan woman held on to the jamb of the door and smiled faintly. She was the wife of the little professor, who, not having the child to look after, was lying groaning in the smoke-room. Sir John nodded to her encouragingly and passed on, leaving behind him the fat child's tyrannical whine: "Wan' to see a waterfa! Wan' to see a waterfa!"

He strode aft and paused to pass the time of day with the big jersey-clad quartermaster of the deck, who was stowing away a pile of folded deck-chairs.

"Ha! G'mornin'," said Sir John cheerily. "G'mornin', quartermaster. Nice little sample o' weather you're givin' us to finish up with—what?"

The big sailor stood upright, touched his cap and smiled. "Wont do you no harm, sir—a little puff o' wind like this," he said flatteringly. "But there's plenty o' gentlemen—used to the sea, too—as would find it too much. I looked in the smoke-room door jus' now, an' there was—"

He was big and brown-bearded, costumed and schooled to fill his part of a good-humored, respectful sea-dog. It was his business to be likable and to be liked; and he knew his business thoroughly. Sir John, in his man-to-man pose before him, was therefore all the more abominably startled when the friendly deference in the face that fronted him went out like a light abruptly switched off; a blueclad arm took him across the chest and brushed him aside so that he reeled against the rail; and the quartermaster sprang past him with a fog-horn roar.

"Man overboard!" he shouted to the bridge. "Man—" Then he altered it and shouting on a new note: "Kid overboard!"

And the ship that had moved through the seas like a thing intent only on movement, absently, like a somnambulist, was suddenly awake at each nerve-center. Already Sir John, recovering his shocked faculties, had followed the direction of the quartermaster's eyes. Opposite the drawing-room door the form of the wan mother lay half against the rail, half in the scupper; she seemed to be making weak, convulsive efforts to drag herself upright. All was plain as a spoken narrative; the child had had his way; he had been lifted to look over the rail at Sir John Wotton's "waterfall;" an access of sickness on the mother's part and his own eagerness had done the rest. Two officers came racing aft; the empty decks filled; the quartermaster at the rail untoggled a life-buoy and sent it spinning over. Bells were loud below; orders rained along the deck; and in the midst of it all came the one fitting and perfect culmination of the drama.

OF the dozen or so who beheld it in the enacting, Sir John was one. While most eyes were aft, straining for a sight of the lost child, he was gazing forward over the crowd that thronged the deck, greedy of interest, savoring the flavor of the pitch. And while yet the roused passengers were streaming forth, he saw his taciturn companion of a few minutes ago, overcoatless now, and in shirt-sleeves, make a bound like a long, easy stride to the top of the rail, poise there for an instant and go flying outboard in a long feet-first jump to the uneasy waters alongside.

A bellow from the bridge—another shout from the quartermaster, more shouts from aft! Sir John, gripping the rail and staring, saw a black head come to the surface on the top of a swell, a swift white arm flash out in a motion of strong swimming; then both slid down to a trough and vanished. There was the jar of propellers reversed; the ship seemed to his landsman's eyes to be moving sideways; and a boat manned by life-belted men slid waterward on squealing tackles. There was a babble of excited voices fore and aft till a megaphone from the bridge stilled it sharply.

Then, from high above them, like a voice from the sky, came the call of the man who had raced to the masthead to keep the child in view. "Port!" he called. An officer at the taffrail signaled the direction to the climbing and tumbling boat. Then, with a note of screaming exultation: "He's—he's got the kid!"



Bells were loud below; orders rained along the deck; and in the midst of it all came the one fitting and perfect culmination of the drama.

The passengers broke into a straggling cheer which the megaphone forthwith crushed to silence. Sir John turned to one who jostled him in his place by the rail and beheld a white-jacketed steward; he bent upon him the full power of his urbanity.

"Excitin', this—what?" he uttered. "By the way, *who* is the young feller who jumped after the child? I was talkin' to him only just now, but I didn't catch his name."

"Eh?" The steward withdrew his eyes unwillingly from the distant glimpse of the boat. Then he took in the general effect of Sir John, and was at once supple and informative.

"Him, sir? He's the gent in Number 60, sir; Skinner 'is name is. Young American gent, sir. Yes, sir—C. Skinner's 'is name."

"Ha!" said Sir John. "Thought he was a Yank. Well, he's done a dashed plucky thing, anyhow. We must give him a cheer when he gets on board!"

NOTHING petty or insular about Sir John, you see; and since it was plain that somebody must lead that cheer, must prompt it and in some sort make it his own, he moved to and fro incubating the matter among the others.

He was at the after-break of the promenade deck when at last the boat came plunging down-wind round the ship's stern and caught a line under her lee. Stewardesses received the child and bore it off to the hospital where its mother already lay; the young man who had rebuffed Sir John came slowly over the rail unaided. He paused to lay aside an oilskin coat which some one had wrapped round him, sending no glance upward to where Sir John had marshaled his waiting chorus, indifferent to or unconscious of the many eyes that fed on him. If he showed anything at all, it was a sort of ruefulness at his water-sodden clothing. He glanced down at it with a little grimace; then came forward deliberately to the ladder that led up to the promenade deck.

His fellow-passengers made a lane for him through which to pass; to one side of it waited Sir John. The young man reached the head of the ladder; Sir John stepped forward, an oratorical hand uplifted.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" He beamed upon them; the voice that had held financial dinners spell-bound prevailed over the snatch of the wind. "Three cheers for the hero, Mr. C. Skinner. Hip-hip—"

"Hurrah!" came the answering discord and thrice, as the ritual requires, the "Hurrah" answered the "Hip-hip."

Mr. C. Skinner came to a halt as Sir John began, and his set face showed first annoyance and then plain surprise. If there had been any present to watch closely enough, it might have been remarked that the surprise commenced with the announcement of his name. He stared at Sir John blankly; and then, as the last shrill and ragged cheer died away, his face relaxed to a slow grin. To the other passengers and their applause he paid no attention; he moved on and spoke to Sir John.

"Well, Nosey Parker," were his astonishing words, "so you've got the name at last!"

And not awaiting such reply as Sir John might have contrived, he showed a wet, ungracious and departing back as he moved on toward his cabin. And since neither at lunch nor at dinner did he show himself in the saloon, Sir John gained no further opportunity to contaminate himself sportively with that particular pitch. And next morning he was too busy in getting ashore and easing himself and his belongings through the Customs to stay and watch how the hero received the reporters.

There is an alchemy in the mere act of going ashore from a

ship; it is prone to turn the limp and seasick rag into a master of men and reveal the life and soul of the smoking-room as one as lifeless and soulless as any other man. Even upon Sir John it had its effect. He had peeled from him the associations of his fellow-passengers as one doffs a soiled garment, and now he rode uptown toward his hotel wearing his customary front. He was genial still, nonchalant and handsome, with a face tending readily to smiles and a fine strong hospitality of manner; but there was no longer the indiscriminating accessibility, the air of general good-fellowship with which he was wont to sail the seas. He did not so much enter the city as don it like a uniform.

He lunched with friends at a club, but the afternoon he had to himself; he was not to commence real business till the next day. He sampled Fifth Avenue and Broadway in the afternoon sunshine, genuinely enjoying the vivacity of them; but he was of his essence a gregarious and social creature, and when evening came, he had had enough of being alone. A solitary dinner in some restaurant, with himself isolated at a table surrounded by pre-occupied couples, did not appeal to him; he checked his coat and hat and turned from the hall of the great hotel toward the dining-room. If, by chance, any acquaintance came to look him up, they would find him there.

White-breasted, black-clad, decorous and decorative, he paused in the entry to the huge room and glanced about to see if there were anyone he knew. If there should be such a one, he was assured of a welcome; one had to know Sir John very well indeed—much better than he allowed most men to know him—ere one refused a greeting to his name, his good looks and his pleasant manner. He saw no friendly native, and moved forward along an aisle between the tables to where an expectant waiter had drawn out a chair.

Suddenly he paused. At a small table, by himself, and garbed like Sir John in the black-and-white which is the livery of caste, was Mr. C. Skinner, the silent young man from the ship.

"Hullo!" said Sir John heartily. He stood at the side of the little table opposite to the young man. The other looked up sharply. "Fancy seein' you! Didn't get a chance of sayin' good-by an' all that when we landed." He put a shapely white hand on the spare chair. "D'you mind if I feed here?"

The young man was staring at him with a look of helplessness, but there was a light in his eye too.

"I don't in the least care where you feed," he answered crisply.

"Right!" said Sir John, and sat down. "Hate browsing alone, don't you? Rather expected I'd see some one I knew somewhere; that's why I came in here."

"Well, you haven't," was the reply. Mr. Skinner beckoned a waiter, who came swiftly. "Say," he said, "is there a table free right the other side of the room? There is?" He rose. "Well, bring the rest of my dinner to it, will you?"

"He's got a sister, an invalid, spending painful days on the veranda of a villa at Antibes."

Sir John sat back, and it is on record that he flushed brightly. "Really," he said, "if you're so keen on bein' alone, I'll—"

The other paused in the act of walking away. His steady eye fixed Sir John's. "Oh, keep your place," he said. "There won't be any room for you at the other table!"

He walked away, not angrily nor conspicuously, but to Sir John his straight black back was nearly as uncomfortable to look at as his contemptuous and unwavering eyes.

"Well, I'm dashed," breathed Sir John. "An' all because I tried to be civil to the beggar! Anybody'd think—anybody'd think I'd been *borin'* him!"



It was astonishing. Only once or twice before had he encountered ashore humble shipmates of past journeys, and with them the single task had been to be gracefully rid of them. Never since he had been knighted for a timely contribution to the funds of the Conservative Party had he thus been spitefully used.

"Only shows you," he philosophized. "*Ong voy-age* is one thing; *ong veel* is another. Mustn't mix 'em. Never again!"

And with these reflections Sir John Wotton figuratively cleaned his fingers after their contact with that which proverbially one cannot touch without defilement.

Sir John's activities in New York and in the great cotton-centers of the South have no part in this narrative. He dealt, bought and sold profitably; his manner and style continued to serve him as a powerful asset; and if he talked a little less often at dinner-tables of his hobby of turning his Atlantic passages into small and refreshing social adventures,—this to men who had traveled as a matter of course on everything from their own feet to the bumpers of freight-trains,—the change was the one last trace of his encounter with pitch. And presently, in the course of time and business, he restored himself to his familiar environment in London.

But it is the faculty of life to make strange joinings of its broken ends; no wise man counts upon an incident as finally closed. One sees Sir John Wotton, after a business lunch in the restaurant of the Savoy, strolling toward the lounge to glance at the first editions of the evening papers while finishing his cigar. White waistcoat-slip, white spats, dark tie and single pearl—the complete uniform of the millionaire—are like a *décor de théâtre* for the effective presentation of his confident and utterly secure personality.

Two or three sleek and youngish men were gathered about a little table, coffee-cups and liqueur-glasses before them, conversing among themselves with that sort of wary quiet, that sufficient brevity of phrase and the occasional overloud laugh which is almost the professional manner of what is called the sporting man. Sir John gave them scarce a glance; he passed their table, picked up a paper and straddled with his back to the fireplace, looking along its columns. If he was aware that some one entered the room immediately afterward and crossed to the seated group of men, it was only subconsciously.

"Why, here's Clem!" some one was greeting the newcomer. "Come an' sit down here, Clem! What you goin' to have? —Billy —Jack—meet my friend Mr. Skinner!"

Still Sir John did not look up; the name did not strike him. There was a murmur of greetings and an order to a waiter. Then one of the others—Billy or Jack—spoke audibly.

"Say, are you the fellow Frank here's been tellin' me about, who jumped off a ship in a storm to fish out a little boy that had fallen overboard?"



"If we could go around some longer way, it would save a lot of pain and sorrow to—to people who don't deserve it!"

The man who had first greeted the newcomer—he had a voice as harsh as a sawmill—broke in with a reply.

"Sure this is him—Clem Skinner, the best ever! The *Minnehaha*—that was the ship; it was in the papers; an' old Clem here, he—"

He went on with his version of the tale; Sir John, over whom the noise of their talk had flowed without disturbance, suddenly caught the significance of it and looked up.

The narrator's gestures sufficiently indicated which of the group was the newcomer; his face was toward Sir John. The latter, with a novel feeling of discomfort at the encounter and then in more bewilderment, stared at him.

He was a tall young man of about twenty-six or twenty-seven, and a catalogue of the main physical features of Sir John's fellow-passenger in the *Minnehaha* would also have served for a description of him. There was even the same little smear of dark mustache; but there the likeness ended. Here was none of that strong bronze of hue, none of the inborn reserve and taciturnity that were like a safe-door shut upon resources of character and personality. This man had a face that had seen more of lamplight than of sunshine; its leanness was wasted rather than trained and ascetic; all the features seemed to droop and sag at the angle of the cigarette that dangled from the slack lip. And as he picked up his glass of brandy, his long, thin hand—a supple, adroit-looking hand that made the effect of some ingenious and narrowly specialized instrument—quivered and slopped some of the liquor to the table.

"Yes—tha's me," he corroborated as the man with the sawmill voice concluded. "Goin' over to the States, I was; an' kid got spilled. Ol' ship *Minnehaha*—yes! Tha's right!"

He was in the sluggish stage of drink. As he spoke, his head moved as if he were nodding in affirmation of his own statements. "An' where's your nurse, Clem?" laughed the man who had first greeted him. "Where d'you manage to lose him?"

"Outside—telephone!" The youth made a movement with his heavy head toward the door to the hall. "Wants me come an' have Turkish bath. I don't wan' Turkish bath. Waiter—same again!"

Sir John could not have accounted (Continued on page 132)

Rosy Can't

By
W. L.
George

Smith is a psychologist-detective whose cases are well above the crime level. This affair of Rosy, as you will see, was the most important case of his career.

"BUT," said the young man in gloomy tones, "it's so very difficult, Mr. Smith."

"Well," replied the psychological expert, his hard eyes looking rather impatient, "you can't expect to induce your wife to adopt this new direction without taking a little trouble."

The client sighed. Then from the outer room came sounds of confusion, mingled voices, protests. There was even a scuffle. To the accompaniment of a cry, "I'll do as I like," the door was thrown open, and at once slammed upon the disheveled and outraged form of Mr. Smith's assistant, while a very pretty young woman, flushed and panting, placed her back against the door behind which the assistant made vain efforts to force her way in.

Mr. Smith and his client stared at her fascinated. Only after a few seconds did Mr. Smith ask: "What do you want?"

"I want to consult you," said the young woman.

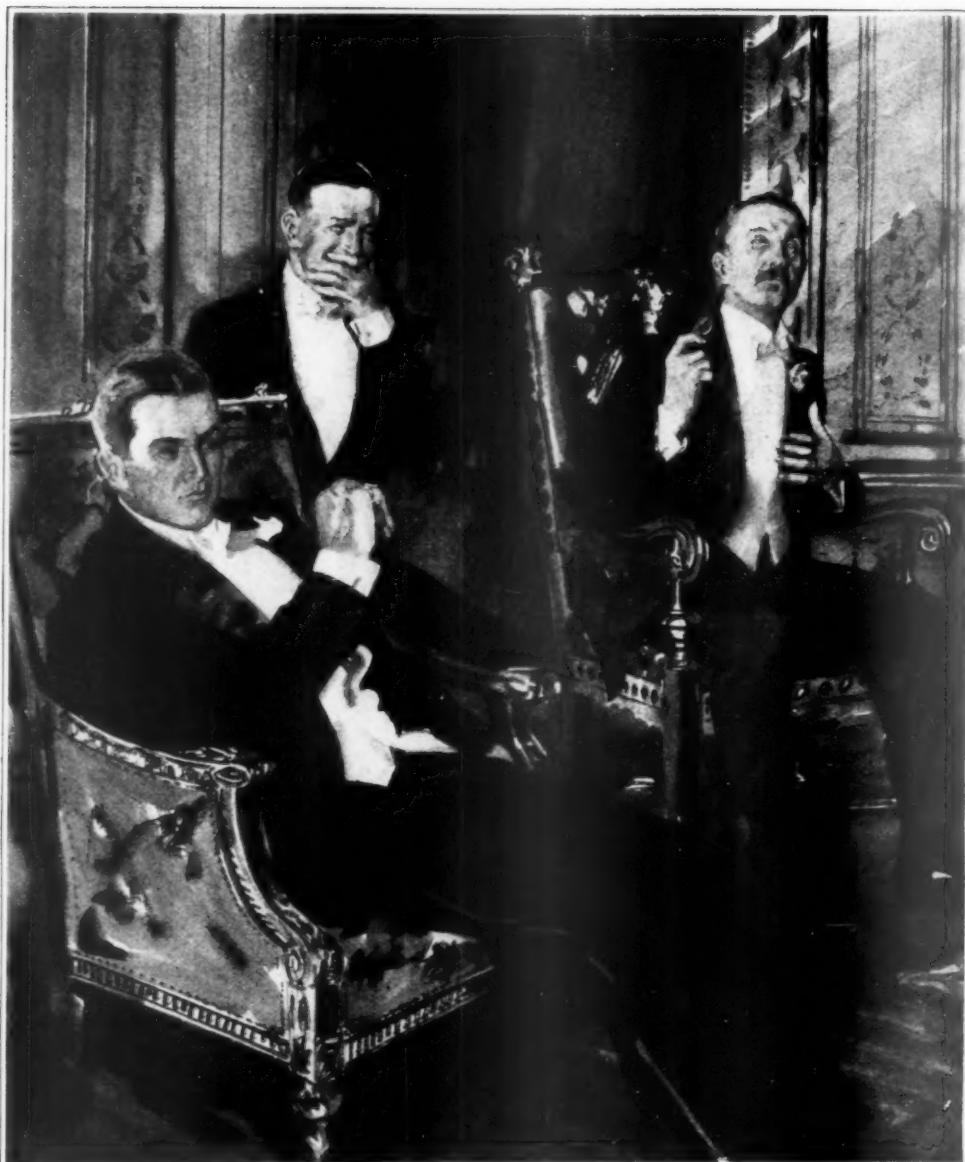
"Don't you see I'm engaged?"

"Yes. Does that matter?"

"Of course it matters. What do you mean by bursting into the room like this?"

"Oh, I didn't mean anything," said the young woman, charmingly. "I just thought I'd come in."

"Will you please go outside at once until I have finished with this gentleman?"



"At seventeen my uncle gave a coming-out dance for me.

"Is it worth while?" inquired the lady. "You are not likely to be long."

"How do you know?"

"When your assistant was out of the room I just listened." Mr. Smith smiled at this exhibition of immorality, but his client leaped up from his chair: "Impertinence!" he gasped.

"No," said Mr. Smith soothingly, "only womanhood in action."

Then to the lady: "Please leave us alone for a moment. I'll see you later." She did not move. Indeed, she flung at the young man a pleasant look, to which he responded by whispering to Mr. Smith that he would follow his instructions and call again. While they conversed, Mr. Smith examined his vivacious client and decided that he had never seen a prettier. She looked about twenty-six or -seven, was petite yet buxom. Upon a broad

Fall in Love



Illustrated by
Frank Snapp

Mr. Smith couldn't help smiling. She was too cheeky and charming to be blamed. So he said: "Oh, fall in love! I'm sorry to disappoint you—"

"Don't be modest," said the young woman. "My trouble is serious; I'm twenty-seven, and I've never been in love. I think it's time I was. Can you arrange it?"

"Let me speak," said Mr. Smith. "Please understand that I am not a matrimonial agent. I don't find husbands for young ladies who—"

"Oh, that's all right," she replied, amiably. "If only I can manage to fall in love with a man, he'll soon marry me."

Mr. Smith smiled. The impudence amused him, and he thought it likely that if a girl such as this were to show favor, she would soon find it requited. Besides, she intrigued him. So he said: "This is a queer case, if I understand you right. You mean that you want me to help you to fall in love with somebody?"

"Not somebody. Anybody'll do. If only I can fall in love with him!"

"True," said Mr. Smith. "You're quite right. Anybody will do, so long as you can fall in love with him. But it's difficult. Hardly anybody, you know, really falls in love; they think they do, but they don't, really."

"If I thought I was in love, it would be quite good enough. Only I never think that."

"You sound very depressed," said Mr. Smith.

"I am. Oh, I do want to fall in love. Everybody says it's lovely."

"What steps have you taken in this quest?"

"Mr. Smith, I've done everything. My name is Rosa de la Bole, but everybody calls me Rosy. I know it sounds silly, but I can't help it. And it's a pity, a nickname like that; it makes one too appealing. I've always wanted to fall in love. I tried when I was nine. It wasn't a success. There was a boy who adored

I was simply mobbed on the first night, and I was also bored."

white neck stood an impudent round head, swathed in thick hair drawn flat and shining over the crown. The eyes were blue, but the pupils were so large that they seemed almost black.

When the young man had gone, Mr. Smith turned toward her, his eyes very severe. "Now," he said, "perhaps you will be so kind as to tell me what you meant by bursting in upon a private interview, to say nothing of listening at my keyhole."

"Well, if I hadn't listened, I shouldn't have known that you were engaged."

"You came in because you knew I was engaged? Why?"

"Because I wanted to see the man you were talking to."

"And why this curiosity?"

"Well, I always like to have a look at a man when I get the chance. I might fall in love with him."

me, but I liked the others quite as well. Then, when I was twelve, I had a chance of quite a big affair. It lasted three months, but I never cared for him; you see, he carried live frogs in his pocket. And at fourteen, my music-master fell in love with me, and made me share the piano-stool with him. He was about sixty, and told me that he loved me so much that if I didn't respond he'd shoot himself."

"What did you say?"

"I said that would be so romantic—just like the opera. Still, he got me into a mess, you know; I was sent to a boarding-school because they heard about him. There I got letters every day from the boys at another school. I made curl-papers of them. What was I to do? Waving wasn't allowed at that school."

"Still," said Mr. Smith, "all that was very early."

"It was just the same thing later. At seventeen my uncle gave a coming-out dance for me, and for the next ten years it's been the same thing as at that dance. I was simply mobbed on the first night, and I was also bored. You know, sometimes I think men are rather repulsive, with their skins like pocket-books; and they never keep their hands quite clean. Still, one has to fall in love, I suppose. I wonder how women do it. I don't mean that lots of men were just attracted to me; there were hundreds of those, and since I was seventeen they've all told me that they loved me desperately, and nineteen have proposed formally. I simply can't tell you the variety of affection I have had to submit to. So far as I can remember, five soldiers, two sailors, one confectioner, three barristers, one curate, one tramway conductor, one bishop, several business men, one duke. There were fat ones and thin ones—Greek gods and gargoyles. The youngest was fourteen; the oldest was eighty-three."

"And you didn't fall in love with any of them?" said Mr. Smith, faintly amused.

"No."

"Are you quite sure you need to fall in love?"

"Well—it is generally done, isn't it?"

"Possibly," said Mr. Smith. "It seems to me that your admirers have been rather clumsy. Every woman can fall in love; to use a metaphor rather lacking in beauty, the time must surely come when a man shall trip her up on the banana skin of emotion. It's only a question of discovering a woman's moment—the moment, the man, and the opportunity together. Miss de la Bole, all love is illusion, and *Titania* was very fond of the weaver in spite of his donkey's head. Let me think about your case for a moment."

Obediently, Rosy went to the window, while Mr. Smith watched her, partly for information, and partly for the sake of her good looks. After a moment he called her back: "Miss de la Bole, I observe that you are considering with interest the handsome hair-dresser opposite, who seems to be marcelling. Don't fall in love with him; I know him: he's a married man with four children."

"Oh, that wouldn't worry me," said Rosy, "but I don't feel in love with him. His mustache is waxed."

"Good!" said Mr. Smith. "I was only testing you to see if the forbidden fruit would attract you. It does not. Evidently you are a bad case. Well, now, there are twenty-two special conditions that favor falling in love. I will not reveal them to you. I will rather give you some instructions."

When Miss de la Bole had given abundant details of her parentage and visiting list, and when Mr. Smith had done, she said: "Well, just as you like. I don't mind doing that, but I don't understand what good it will do."

"You may later," said Mr. Smith. "Come back in a fortnight and tell me."

WHEN, a fortnight later, the charming person sat again in the armchair, Mr. Smith saw by her lack of roguishness that his first attempt had failed. "So it was no good," he said.

"No good! And I've been so bored. I don't think much of your treatment. Whatever use did you think it was, sending me to stay with my aunt in a country-house nine miles from a railway station? And in a place where there was only one man fit to talk to—my aunt's stepson!"

"Yes, I knew all that. And you'd also told me that your cousin, once removed, bored you stiff."

"Then why did you do it? If you'd sent me to a garrison town, I shouldn't have been very hopeful; still, I'd have gone. But you shut me up in a country-house for a whole fortnight with a dull, dull young man, and you expect me—"

"I had every reason to expect, Miss de la Bole—though I

didn't guarantee success. I had every reason to hope that you would fall in love with your cousin simply because he was the only man on the scene. To have sent you to a garrison town would have been fatal. If I could have found a desert island for you, any shipwrecked mariner would in due course have engaged your affections. I tried to reproduce the desert island."

"Oh, it was desert enough."

"Perhaps you were rescued too soon. Miss de la Bole, I assure you that the expedient was most promising. It is natural that young men and women should fall in love; you need only to bring them together without interruption, for propinquity is the thief of coldness. When a man is the only man, first he may weary; then he may become important, for after all he is the only man, the sole representative of man—he embodies all the virtues of his sex, and what is more important, all its vices. Solitude leads to desire for companionship. The "only" man becomes "the" man. Still, in this case, it's clear I have failed. Let me consider what else can be done for you."

After a little thought, Mr. Smith made a suggestion which the lady received with a certain irritation: "Oh," she said, "I don't like that at all. Why should I do it?"

"Because I tell you to," said Mr. Smith masterfully.

"I shall have to do all sorts of disagreeable things, and the men may—"

Mr. Smith remained enigmatic. "Leave that to me," he said. "My first suggestion failed; my second may succeed. After all, I'll make all the arrangements."

"But you aren't telling me how it will work," said the girl, "except just—"

"That's all you've got to do. We'll see what happens. Try it," he added winningly. "You've nothing to do in the world, have you?"

"Oh, well," said Rosy, "since I've started consulting you, I suppose I must do as you tell me to. Thank you very much!" Shaking hands rather sadly, she went away.

ROSY did not return for two months, and when again she sat before Mr. Smith, a sweet gravity lay upon her charming features—and so, at first, Mr. Smith wondered whether this plan had succeeded. Very gently he said: "Am I to congratulate you?"

She shook her head.

"What! failed again? That's funny. There's something about you today, something gentle and moving."

"Well," said Rosy, in a more sprightly tone, "if you'd been seeing all the dreadful things I've been seeing for six weeks, you'd understand that I wasn't feeling chirpy. But it wasn't any good—at least, not the way I wanted it to be."

"Tell me about it, or rather, let us recapitulate. With the greatest difficulty, using all my influence, I obtain from a medical friend of mine leave for you to enter his nursing-home as a probationary nurse. For you who are untrained and without a vocation! And you come back seeming displeased!"

"I have every reason to be displeased. I wanted to fall in love. I haven't. I don't say that it was dull in the nursing-home. No. It was rather interesting. I will say this for you, Mr. Smith: you did the right thing in sending me to a surgical home. I should have hated ordinary diseases. The cases looked so nice and clean, and the portions that weren't damaged were quite all right."

"Oh," said Mr. Smith hopefully, "you did go so far as to notice that."

"It didn't make much impression on me, really. You see, I didn't have enough to do. Not being a real nurse, except that I wore the clothes, and being only a sort of boarder, they didn't even make me scrub. They just said I was a little ray of sunshine and told me to go and play on the patients and cheer them up. I did what I could. In six weeks I have comforted four broken legs, several displaced cartilages, and a great variety of inside complications. It rather upset me, and it still does. I've lost weight. Do you think I look thin?"

"Not too thin," said Mr. Smith as he considered the glowing eyes and the brilliant cheeks. "No; you've survived. But what I want to know is this: weren't you a little moved by all these agreeable men suffering so patiently?"

"Not patiently, Mr. Smith; I see you haven't been a nurse."

"Anyhow, suffering. Didn't it move you to think—shall we say in the case of one of them, a young one, a good-looking one—didn't it move you a little?"

"Yes," said Rosy, meditatively, "it did—rather. There was one, a diamond-merchant. I liked him. He was funny. He



"And there was an American college boy too. He was quite nice."

wouldn't tell me what was the matter with him, but insisted that he'd come in to have his head off and a new one put on, to improve his appearance. That would certainly have been a good idea. And a young soldier—but I had to help him turn over once, and he said—I won't tell you the things he said. They do say things. Nursing brings out the worst in a man."

"And didn't you like it?"

She sighed.

"No," Mr. Smith pursued, "I see it was a failure. I confess that I thought your sympathy for weakness and sickness would entangle you into an affection for one of the patients. That the jauntiness of the suffering, the bravery, all that would make at least one of them romantic in your eyes."

"No. I'm sorry—though there were three married men in the nursing home, and I had a good look at them."

"Miss de la Bole! How disgraceful."

"I'm too miserable to be moral. I must fall in love, if it were with the Sultan. I could do with a broken heart, if that's the best I can manage."

"Now tell me: how did you like my friend the surgeon?"

"Oh, he's very nice. He orders nurses about a little too much."

"They do, I know. Did you mind?"

"No. Once he said to me that he'd asked me for a packet of cotton-wool, and not for my opinion. Rude, wasn't it?"

"Did you mind?"

"No, I didn't even mind."

"Oh, dear—oh, dear! And I was hoping that another of the potent provocations to love would operate in your case, that you would share the fate of so many young women who come to worship the one who stands in authority over them, that you would admire your chief and fall under his sway."

"Sorry! That didn't work, either. Nothing works, Mr. Smith. I shall never fall in love. I'm very miserable. I shall take to good works."

"Don't do that," said Mr. Smith, patting her hand. "Don't be discouraged. I have many resources, and they are not yet exhausted. Here is another method, which may work."

Miss de la Bole listened to the end, then said: "I don't mind that. I don't know what good it's going to do me, but it may be rather fun. After all, I can afford it." She paused, as she got

up from the armchair, and looked at Mr. Smith gratefully. "Do you know," she said, "it's awfully kind of you to take so much trouble. Yes, I know, it's your profession. Still, it's awfully kind, and I'm so difficult."

As Mr. Smith showed her out he replied: "My duty is my pleasure, Miss de la Bole. Don't stay away too long, and never despair."

"MR. SMITH," said Miss de la Bole, when another two months had elapsed, and, rather sunburnt, she sat down again before him, "I'll never forgive you this."

"Oh!" said Mr. Smith. "What are you quarreling with me about? Because you've not fallen in love, or because you have? Both are disastrous."

"I'm quarreling with you," was the reply, "because I've been bored stiff. This is the second time you've locked me up on an island."

"A floating island this time."

"But, I ask you,—you wouldn't tell me before I left, so tell me now,—what was the use of sending me on a voyage to South America—on a rotten little steamer of six thousand tons, which stood on its head, except when it was trying to turn turtle? I'm a good sailor, but oh, I was so bored! Nothing to do except walk round and round that deck, or play deck-quoits, the dullest of games, and in the evening have to witness entertainments in the saloon that made one yawn one's head off. Oh, I've been so bored!"

"But tell me about the men."

"Oh, they were all right. Men generally are, but they're nothing more. There were lots of men on the boat, coffee-planters, engineers; there was even an explorer. But why you should have thought that by locking me on a boat with a lot of men, I'd be more likely to fall in love than I am here, surrounded by three million men, I really can't tell."

"Ah, you know, Rosy—I beg your pardon, Miss de la Bole," said Mr. Smith, "you don't understand psychology. I've failed, I agree, but it was quite a good move. I knew you'd be bored, for one is on steamers; I knew you'd hate clock-golf, and saloon entertainments, and so now I will tell you that I hoped you would resort to the only amusement which is at all effective on a steamer. Love!"

(Continued on page 104)

A vivid drama of life and love and death
in the Far North, by the man who wrote
"The Mistake of M. Bruette."

Once at Drowning River

By George Marsh

Illustrated by Frank Schoonover



The sinewy Cree swung the heavy

"SO you're ordered to Fort Mamatawan, Stuart?" McCloud, the factor at Fort Albany, smiled mysteriously.

"Do you realize," he continued, "that you'll be living within three miles of the handsomest woman in the North Country?"

Gordon Stuart, late factor at Whale River, far on the east coast, and bound for his new billet by way of the Albany and Drowning rivers, looked quizzically at the speaker.

"Handsome girl in the North at Mamatawan—what do you mean, McCloud?"

"I mean just that, man. Buried up on the east coast, you doubtless haven't heard of Mademoiselle Lecroix; but let me tell you, she's the sole topic of conversation here and at Moose when Company men get together."

"Daughter of the French factor at their Drowning River post, I suppose?" suggested Stuart.

"Yes. Hortense Lecroix is her name. Pretty name, isn't it? And that's all there is to the story, old man. You'll be lucky if you ever get more than a long-distance look at her. Old Lecroix watches her like a wolf—wont mix with our people at all. You'll have the pleasure of wintering in that God-forsaken country and never so much as a 'Bon jour, mademoiselle!' to break the monotony. Fraser was at Mamatawan three years and got just one good look at her."

"Have you seen her yourself, McCloud?"

"Oh, yes; she comes down with the fur-brigade to the French post here every summer."

"Is she really a beauty, then?" Stuart was growing interested in his fair neighbor-to-be through the white silence of the coming winter on the lonely Drowning.

"Man, she's nothing less. If I were her father, I'd keep her in a ten-foot dog-stockade, with good-looking women as scarce as they are in this country."

Days later, the canoe of the new factor of Fort Mamatawan turned into the portage trail at the foot of the first white-water

above the fork of the Albany and the Drowning rivers. The Cree voyageurs were busily unloading the craft when suddenly Baptiste, the head man, looked up with a "Quay! Quay!"

Stuart turned from a pack he was lifting from the boat, to see a big Peterboro canoe emerging from the forest on the shoulders of four Indians.

"Franch Companee fur-cano'!" exclaimed the head man, turning to Stuart.

The heart of the factor speeded its beat as he recalled the words of McCloud at Albany: "She comes with the fur-brigade every summer."

"What luck!" he thought. "She'll be with this outfit. I'll have a good look now."

Parring a civil exchange of the Cree salutation, "Quay! Quay!" between the French company crew as they laid their canoe on the beach, and the Hudson's Bay men, there was a marked absence of the customary chatter and handshaking which follows the meeting of canoes in the North. The rivalry of the companies for the fur-trade was plainly reflected in the attitude of their men.

When they had unloaded, Stuart's crew swung their canoe to their shoulders and started over the carry. But Stuart himself had no intention of abandoning his strategic position at the lower end of the portage. She would doubtless cross at once and wait on the shore for the loading of her boat. There he would have the chance to prove the truth of the gossip at Albany. There he would stay. So he proceeded to mark time by repacking his private duffle bags.

Shortly the French crew went back for their fur-packs, leaving Stuart alone.

Out of the spruce, down that age-traveled Indian portage, he mused, must come this Rose of the North. Eight years he had spent among the Eskimos and Crees in the solitudes of the east coast. It was eight years since he had been outside and seen a comely white woman at the settlements, for the few white women



body of his chief to his back and started for home.

at Fort George and Whale River, whatever their virtues, were hardly beautiful. So he waited, thrilled with the thought of the daughter of his future rival; Stuart was but twenty-eight, and had imagination.

Presently he heard a woman's laughter back in the forest, and shortly a black-bearded man of middle age appeared, followed by a girl.

Stuart rose, and removing his felt hat, said: "Good morning!" Lecroix nodded curtly, muttering an inaudible reply; but the girl, meeting the stranger's admiring eyes frankly, returned in the most musical voice Stuart had ever heard, a gracious: "*Bon jour, monsieur!*"

As they passed him, standing bareheaded, a vision of blue-black hair, knotted low on the neck, dusky eyes, and white, regular teeth etched itself into the memory of the Hudson's Bay man.

The two continued up the shore while Stuart's eager gaze followed the graceful figure of the girl, the lines of which not even the heavy corduroy jacket and skirt could quite hide.

"Yes," he confided to himself, "they were right at Albany. And here I am going to winter three miles away, with only the river between us—and never so much as a look at her."

Lecroix and his daughter seated themselves on the shore with their backs to him and waited for their Indians. Clearly there was no place in this picture for a Hudson's Bay man; so Stuart made up a pack for his line and started over the carry, where he met the second canoe of the fur-brigade.

When he returned, he found the situation unchanged, and humored himself by calling:

"Good day, monsieur, mademoiselle! *Bon voyage!*"

The girl turned, and to his surprise he heard a lilting: "*Au revoir, monsieur!*"

Did that "*Au revoir*" have a meaning other than the conventional one, he wondered. She had said: "Till we meet again!" Was she lonely in that Drowning River post? How could she be otherwise?

With a thrill in his blood, the Scotchman turned and swung up the trail.

Halfway over the portage he met the *voyageurs* of the French company bent double under their packs of fur. Behind them strolled a Cree half-breed, from whose evil-looking face snapped the beady eyes of a mink.

As Stuart met him, the half-breed stopped.

"You new boss at Matagami?" he insolently threw out.

Gordon casually surveyed the Cree from matted hair to moccasins.

"Yes, I'm the new boss at Matagami," he drawled.

"Well, I tell you somet'ing." The half-breed moved nearer, shaking a finger in the factor's face. "You no mak' talk wid de *file* of M'sieur Lecroix."

The Scotch blood of Stuart was boiling, but he kept a grip on himself, for he was curious to know if the half-breed was acting under instructions from his chief at the end of the portage.

"I, Jacques Lafitte, head man for de Franch Compancee, say to you: M'sieu' Hudson's Bay, you weel fin' plentee trouble eef you mak' talk wid de —"

Stuart's right fist met the half-breed's jaw in a fierce uppercut, checking unfinished the insulting warning. Caroming off a big birch to the trail, Lafitte lay for a moment half dazed; then, wild with fury, he got to his feet with the snarl of a wolverine and rushed the waiting white man with his knife.

But Stuart had not lived eight years on the east coast in vain. He knew what was coming. As the maddened half-breed lunged, the Hudson's Bay man stepped aside and swung, with all the force of his one hundred and eighty pounds, to the ear. Plunging headlong, Lafitte crumpled up on the trail.

Gordon picked up the knife and tossing it into the bush, continued on to the upper end of the carry, convinced that the Cree had been acting under orders.

As his blood cooled, he berated himself for playing into Lecroix' hands. It was a pretty way to start in at Mamatawan with a

feud on with the French for beating their head man. Now he had definitely cut himself off from seeing her again, except by chance.

Then he wondered what she would say when she heard the half-breed's lying version of the affair—what she would think.

The factor found his men waiting for him beside the loaded canoe. Calling Baptiste, his bow-man, aside, he told him what had happened on the portage.

"Ah-hah!" Baptiste's swart features went grave. "Dat Black Jack, he mak' some trouble for dees. We have trouble wid heem ovaire de Cree hunters, las' long snow."

"He was surely looking for trouble today, Baptiste. I had to give it to him."

"By Gar! Eet ees good t'ing you slap heem, but Black Jack, he not forget."

FIVE days later Stuart was installed in the factor's quarters at Fort Mamatawan. From the clearing in front of the trade-house he could see far below, on the opposite shore, the whitewashed log buildings of the rival company; with his field-glass he could make out the people of the post moving about their duties. But it would be weeks before he might hope to catch a fleeting glimpse of the figure of the woman who had strangely possessed his thoughts from the moment he had first seen her.

September came, and the first frosts painted the ridges of the valley of the Drowning with the ochre and gold of birch and poplar, rimming the river shores with the red of the willows. Now the mists hung above the water in the still mornings, before the lifting sun, searching them out, rolled them back on the hills. Already, behind the trade-house and factor's quarters at the post, split birch was heaped high against the coming of the stinging northers and the pinch of the long cold.

His encounter with Black Jack Lafitte had placed the new factor high in the estimation of the Crees who wintered at the post; but Andrew Scott, the clerk, and Baptiste knew Lafitte of old and repeatedly warned their chief that some day the crafty half-breed would strike in the dark.

Nevertheless the Scotchman refused to take Lafitte seriously. Many a time on the east coast he had compelled the respect of recalcitrant husky and Cree through the agency of a stone-hard nerve and a heavy fist. The threats of a rat-faced knife-fighter of the Mamatawan country, he assured them, should not trouble his sleep. But what did harass his dreams was the graceful figure of a girl with heavy blue-black hair who had smiled and called tantalizingly: "*Au revoir, monsieur!*"

Then one night a company hunter, who had met them on the river, brought word that Monsieur Lacroix and his daughter had returned from Albany.

The next day Stuart took his shotgun and telling his clerk that he was going out for a mess of partridge, left the post by the down-river trail. Scott chuckled softly when he saw a pair of field-glasses slung from the shoulder of the factor—then straightway looked serious. This would never do; some day they would see Stuart prowling around across the river from the French post, and then Black Jack would try to get him from ambush.

Later the tall figure of Baptiste appeared in the doorway of the trade-house.

"Baptiste, what was old Joseph telling you this morning?"

"Old Joe he hunt down river, two day back. He meet old woman from de Franch pos', at de feesh nets. She say Black Jack, he feel ver' bad; he say some day M'sieu' Stuar' goin' hear de bullet seeng round hees head."

"Do you know where Stuart is now? Well, he's cruising round in the bush down-river trying to get a look at Mademoiselle Lacroix through his glasses. He didn't tell me, but I know."

Without a word Baptiste took his rifle from the gun-rack and left the trade-house.

At dusk Stuart returned, elated. For ten minutes, from the opposite shore, he had watched Hortense Lacroix playing with some husky puppies in the post clearing.

WITH October came a week of the magic, mellow days of Indian summer; then a sudden shift of the wind to the north, and night after night, fleeing myriads of geese from the great Bay swept noisily south across the face of the red moon. Each morning a film of ice edged the back waters of the river. Then the first snow-swirls, vanguards of the withering northers, drove down across the Kewatin barrens, and the valley of the Drowning lay white in the grip of the long snows.

All too slowly the weeks of early winter dragged on for the restless factor of Fort Mamatawan. Marooned for years at

Whale River, where the sole white woman was the matronly wife of the Church of England missionary, the romantic strain in his nature had been starved to the point where the society of any white girl, however plain, would have been agreeable. But to live through the dreary months of the long snows within a short dash with his dog-team, down the river trail, of a girl whose face haunted his dreams, and to be unable even to see her, became well-nigh unbearable. Formerly a great reader, he found that books had ceased to hold his interest, for a laughing pair of long-lashed black eyes flashed at him from every page. The conversation of the amiable Andrew Scott palled on him, and he sat night after night silent, morose, gazing at the huge box-stove which heated their quarters.

Stuart made no attempt to diagnose his symptoms; all he knew was that he wanted to see her, to talk to her again—this fair daughter of Lacroix.

Twice he took Baptiste and the dogs, and in a vain attempt to break the spell which she had cast upon him, traveled far into the muskeg country for caribou. But the toil of the winter trail through wind-whipped barrens brought but temporary surcease. On his return, the old longing to see her revived anew.

One wild night in December, Stuart sat smoking with Andrew Scott in their quarters. Driven by the northwester, powdery crystals of snow beat like shot against the windows. Suddenly above the clamor of the storm the yelping of the post dogs caused the factor to look up from his book.

"What's the matter with the dogs, Andrew? No Cree is crazy enough to travel in this weather."

"Maybe a packet from Albany," suggested Scott. "Queer, though, they couldn't wait for the Christmas mail!"

Soon the entire canine population of Mamatawan joined in the uproar. Undoubtedly a dog-team had turned in from the river trail. Shortly light appeared over in the trade-house; and Stuart had his hand on the latch of the door of his quarters when it swung back, admitting Baptiste in a smother of snow.

The deep-set eyes of the head man wore a puzzled expression as he said:

"Cree from de Franch pos' wid dees." He handed his chief an envelope.

The address in a feminine hand read: "*Monsieur Gordon Stuart—Fort Mamatawan.*"

A MESSAGE from her! So bewildered was the factor that he read the address again and again; then with fingers that fumbled, he managed to open the envelope.

What could be the meaning of it, sent on such a night, he wondered, his pulse racing.

The note written in English ran:

Dear Monsieur Stuart:

My father is very ill. I am broken of heart. Oh, monsieur, the Crees say you have skill with the sick. I have despair of his life. Will you come tonight? Will you help me? With greatest gratitude,

HORTENSE LACROIX.

Stuart handed the note to Scott, his heart pounding with an indescribable joy. He was going to her. She needed him. In a half-hour he would be with her, helping her, consoling her.

Scott read the note, while the narrow eyes of Baptiste searched questioningly the faces of the white men.

"Wait!" Scott turned quizzically to Stuart. "This can't be a trap of Black Jack's to get you down-river and shoot you up from the shore?"

"Why, man alive," rasped the factor, "no one else at that post could write that hand." He seized the paper. "No one but a woman of education—look at it!"

Again Scott read the note.

"Yes, I believe you're right," he admitted. Then he turned to Baptiste: "Did you know that the old man down-river was sick, Baptiste?"

"I, no; old Joseph tell me; he stop dere to talk to old woman, t'ree, four day back."

"This letter, Baptiste," explained the factor, "says that Lacroix is very sick and asks me to go with medicine."

The lean face of the half-breed shaped an inscrutable look as he shrugged his wide shoulders.

"Ah-hah! Eef you go, den Baptiste go and look out for Black Jack."

"All right; we wont take the huskies; we don't want a dog-fight down there tonight," said Stuart. Baptiste left the room



Scott led her to where the fever-racked factor lay bandaged and bound. Hortense Lecroix had kept her word.

"I can't help Lacroix, if he is very bad, Scott, but I'll take the medicine kit and do my best. It's fortunate my father was a surgeon back in Scotland and taught me to dress wounds and use the simple remedies. The Crees thought me a medicine man when I fixed up Esau's infected leg, but I know very little."

Then Stuart's heart slowed down as a thought entered his mind: if her father died she would go home and he'd lose her.

His clenched teeth swelled the muscles of his strong jaw as he muttered, getting into his caribou-skin capote: "But I won't let the old man die."

Shortly, the red messenger of Hortense Lacroix, followed by Baptiste and his chief, leaving the timbered shores which faded into the murk and the smother of snow, battled the fury of the northwester over the drifted river trail. Bent double, the better to buck the drive of the wind and shield their faces from the needle-pointed barrage of snow-crystals, keeping the trail solely by the feel of their snowshoes, the three white figures hurried on their errand of mercy—Baptiste carrying his uncased rifle pointing significantly into the back of the Cree.

They were halfway to the French post and close in to a thickly timbered point of shore toward which the trail swung as the river turned, when the Cree, leading, suddenly stopped, turned to Baptiste and pointed ahead.

The blurred outline of the figure of a man barred their way. Jamming the muzzle of his rifle into the Cree's back, Baptiste shouted "*Marche!*" and the bewildered Indian continued.

For an instant Stuart bitterly regretted leaving his gun at the post. If this, after all, were a game of Black Jack's, it would be up to Baptiste alone. Still, they could not see to shoot at ten yards, much less from the shore.

It was but a few steps to the unknown man in the trail, who stood with arms raised above his head as they approached.

Then Baptiste shouted, "Esau!" and the factor understood.

It was Esau, the Scotch-Cree from Mamatawan, who greeted them with:

"Black Jack lie close een hees hole: dees sleep. I travel dat spruce for heem lak I hunt de moose."

Stuart's frost-bitten features twisted into the effigy of a smile at the precaution the faithful Baptiste had taken against an ambush. He had sent Esau out secretly as a flank patrol to comb the "bush" alongshore.

THE dogs of the French post howled a surly welcome as the party turned in from the river trail. Leaving Baptiste and Esau at the trade-house, where Black Jack Lafitte was conspicuous by his absence, Stuart went to the factor's quarters. Kicking off his snowshoes and beating the

snow from capote and moccasins, he knocked. The door was opened by an Indian woman, who took his coat and led him to the living-room.

So this, he thought as he pushed back from his forehead the yellow hair wet from melted snow, was her home! Everywhere the room was eloquent with the feminine touch. The rude furniture, the walls, bore the mark of a woman's taste, a woman's genius for making a mere living place a home.

In a moment he was to see her, to talk to her—this girl whose face had haunted his dreams, this woman whose memory he could not banish from his waking thoughts. He could feel his heart in his throat—this hardy son of the North whose Scotch mother had given him the strain of the romantic in his nature. Then he heard the pat of moccasins, and turned to look into the dark eyes of Mademoiselle Lacroix.

"Monsieur Stuart!" she said with a slight accent, impulsively offering her hand. "You are so good to come on this night so

terrible, so kind not to remember how my father, he forgot the courtesee of the French on the *rivière* last summer."

For an instant Stuart stood inarticulate. He looked long into the dark eyes which so frankly met his—eyes from which fear and nights of vigil beside the sick man had driven the laughter he remembered.

Then: "It is the law of the North, mademoiselle," he said, "to give aid to those who need it. I know little of medicine, but I'll do what I can, gladly."

Momentarily the sadness left the dark eyes, which smiled up at him beneath their frame of luxuriant hair.

"You are verree good to us, monsieur."

With an effort the factor pulled himself together for the work in hand.

"How long has your father been sick?" he asked.

"He has been wounded in the arm, monsieur, with his gun while hunting, six days ago."

"Um! He has fever, and swelling in the arm—is delirious?"

"Yes, monsieur; he is delirious all today."

Nodding, Stuart breathed a sigh of relief. Gunshot-wound infection—that was better than some strange malady he could not hope to combat. He knew the treatment for infection from wounds—had operated in his crude way on Cree and Eskimo.

"His arm is so swollen, monsieur," she continued, "and oh, such pain he has had, and fever. Say you can help heem, monsieur!"

Marooned in the pitiless North with a sick man rapidly growing worse, beyond the reach of medical aid, her nerves unstrung by days of worry, the girl turned away sobbing.

Stuart opened his kit and laid out the few surgical instruments. (Continued on page 121)



As the maddened half-breed lunged, the Hudson's Bay man stepped aside and swung.

The Treasure Hole

*They mouth and murmur,
they dream and dally,
Counting the ashes of long dead years.
But ye go down to the mystic valley,
Brave-hearted pioneers!*

By
Beatrice
Grimshaw



Illustrated by Frederic Dorr Steele

UPON Walter Lane the terror of New Guinea had fallen. There are things about this little lost continent in the back end of the Pacific world that no one, not even a Chief Medical Officer in all his glory, understands.

When all the learned cackle about nerve-strains and "phobias" is done, you may just go back to the elementary truth that New Guinea stupefies, terrorizes, or calls right to her heart, all who make their dwellings within her strangely outlined shores. She leaves none indifferent; she kills, maims, caresses, but never passes by. Who spends one northwest and one southwest season between Daru and Mambare may sail the world round and round thereafter, may return to old life and bygone days, may even think that he forgets—but none the less he will not, till the end of his life, outgrow New Guinea's mark.

Lane was not of the stupefied. They are the uneducated, the little-use, the men—and women—who slip into a corner in Port Moresby or Samarai, live paralyzed from boat to boat, and wake to three days' brief excitement in five weeks, when the B. P. steams in. Nor was he of those who love the Land of Mystery, the virgin-armed who stands alone among all the lands of earth, unwon by boldest pioneer or explorer, who stabs her wooers with the sword of a thousand perils, and smiles unconquered above the last corpse added to the pile.

He was of those who fear New Guinea. It is a cruel land, a land where Nature "red in tooth and claw" crouches by the track, and snarls round the corner just ahead, always ready to spring. There are so few of the white folk,—not a thousand, all counted,—and the country is so big and so untamed, that a man on whom the fear of New Guinea has fallen can scarce sleep by night or work by day, for thinking of what may happen—if the steamer

does not come, if the relief does not turn up, if the wrenched ankle gives way, if the waterspout strikes his boat as it struck Dinny Lawton's, if he falls sick and the carriers desert, so that for fear of the meat-ants he must set his revolver to his temple, as did young Clauson in the wild main ranges only a year ago.

Lane, too late, had found that he was not of the pioneers. New Guinea's romance had attracted him, as it attracts many who cannot go. The chance of going came to him, and he left the safe monotones, the spring mornings and autumn eves, of home for eternal summer—adventure, the wide world.

And the wide world arose and smote him. Lane had been a bank teller in the old world; a promising youth in his late twenties, pointed out as one who would get on if he "stuck to it." He sickened, as men do, of safety and routine, and thought, as men will, that the sickening was a proof of his ability for greater things—wider life, freedom.

He found it, on a trading-post at the western end of Papua, four days' journey from the nearest other white man, in a palm-built hut set at the edge of a steaming swamp full of crocodiles, by a beach where he might walk alone at eventide while the sun went down in sullen red about the sullen waters of the Gulf of Papua—walk alone, and remember.

On a day, without notice, he canoed up to the nearest point where cutters and launches passed, waited in the native village till one was sighted, signaled it, and got back—back to God-forsaken, grilled Port Moresby, which lay panting under Paga Hill like a lizard under a hot stone. And in Port Moresby no one wanted him. He lived on credit, and so sank to the first circle of Port Moresby's hell—"in debt at the stores." By and by he reached the second and worse circle—"credit stopped at the stores"—which carries with it (since people always know) the scorch of

public disgrace. When Lane touched this, he knew the third circle—"on Government rations"—was near; after that would come "Government-paid passage south," the fourth, lowest and last.

Now, Lane had been a gentleman, in his way, and death seemed better than these various circles of Papua's inferno; but he did not know how to die, cleanly and comfortably, so that no one should know he had killed himself out of despair. It is one of the things they do not teach even at the excellent second-grade school where he had gone as a boy. On the contrary, they had taught him just enough compulsory swimming to keep him from drowning with any sort of comfort, and in the science department had carefully abstained from telling him anything interesting or useful about poisons.

Nevertheless the jetty called him, lying long and quiet, in this mid-interval between steamers under and over the stars of sky and water. He had a vague notion in his head, as he padded out in his cheap sand-shoes, silent and alone, of doing—perhaps not tonight, but soon—as one did with unwanted dogs. If you tied a big stone around your neck, and dropped off—But then, they would know when they found him. Was there no way in which a gentleman could kill himself privately and decently?

He sat down to consider the matter, under a pile of stacked timber from Vailala way. By and by he lay down. By and by he made up his mind to sleep there. It was better than his room in town—from which he would probably be thrown out tonight, in any case.

THE moon had crossed the sky and stood tiptoe on Fisher-man Island. Had there been a moon when he lay down? No. Clearly, he had slept. It was late—near morning; and two men on the other side of the balks of timber were talking.

They were white men, and they must, so he reasoned, have come in by the little ketch that lay tied up to the jetty near the timber-pile. There hadn't been a boat there when he lay down. The men were probably her owner and some friend, who did not fancy a hot cabin to sleep in, this glorious night. For it was glorious. Even he, who hated Papua, could see the wonder and beauty of the great, unlivid in hill ranges, circling far and fairy-blue in the moonlight about the silent port; the glimmer of breaking foam on the coral reef, a long way out from land.

Coral reefs! What they had meant to him, once! Now, "*Of his bones are coral made*," murmured some old school memory in his mind. That was how he would end, somewhere and somehow; he, the unfit, who had dared Papua when he should have "stuck to it" safe at home.

"I'd sell my soul," he thought, "for a third-class ticket back."

Do you believe in tempting "Providence," in judgments, in chances, that come because you call? I know you say you do not. But think awhile; remember?

The men behind the balks were talking; they went on loudly and carelessly—for who could be on the wharf toward moon-setting of a waning moontide, here in reputable Port Moresby?

Walter Lane heard them. They were not people who had come by the ketch, after all; they were people who meant to sail with her, and they were waiting for the tide. And they talked of how to get money.

He listened. His mouth lay open; he did not move, but his heart drummed hard on his ill-covered ribs. Money, money! It was the only god, the only thing worth having. How had he ever lost sight of that shining truth, he who had handled it so long? Yes, and he would handle it again, but not for other men, this time. He listened.

"Frogna! never told," were the words that first caught his attention. He remembered the name; it was one not easy to forget. It, and the owner of it, had lain for many months now beneath the long, neglected grasses and the scarlet brush-flowers of the Port Moresby graveyard, away among the hills where no one went. Lane recollected clearly enough, the day when he had arrived in Port Moresby, and the sight, as he walked up to the hotel, of a whaleboat with a coffin in it starting off from one of the jetties. The oarsmen had been puff-ball-headed natives clad in red and corn-colored cottons; two white mourners in shabby shirts and khaki trousers had crowded up beside the coffin, one of them leaning back sucking at his pipe, while the other drew the cork of a beer-bottle. As the whaleboat had pulled away, heading for the silent valley among the hills where men slept quieter than they did in Port Moresby hotels, the man with the bottle had poured out a brimming glass and thrown a few drops from it on the coffin lid.

"Last drink together, Alick," he had said. "Here's luck!" He

had passed the glass to the other mourner, who in his turn had spilled a little and finished the rest.

"Here's luck!" he had said, wiping his mouth with his buttonless sleeve. "And here's luck to me," he had said, filling the glass again. "—some of Frogna!s own dashed luck that the beggar wouldn't tell anyone about." He had gloomed at the coffin, while spray dashed from the oars, and the boat slipped away.

Lane had no consciousness of remembering the odd characteristic scene until the repetition of Frogna!s name brought it all back to him. Luck! What was Frogna!s luck, and how was it that he had taken it with him to the grave? Please the gods of fortune, some of it might come his way; no one in New Guinea wanted it more. What were they saying, there on the other side of the balks of Vailala timber?

"Not if he hadn't 'a' had his own launch, and run it himself. Come into Port every few weeks, loaded up to the gunnels with copra, big launch too—the Company has her now."

"Look here, I'm a man who has lived in this blank country eighteen blank years. No one can go and tell me that copra, all Froggy could pick up trading, could make him seven hundred pounds to leave behind him in less than six months. And he did leave it." (Starshell of corroboratory language.) "The" (bad-name) "who runs the Pacific Bank, he told me, bless him if he didn't. And he said Froggy hadn't a bean when he came."

"That's it—that's it. He hadn't. And then he goes and dies, and leaves all that for the Intestate Estates to worry over. And he says he made it out of copra-trading. He never! Why, there's not any copra to speak of, to buy from the niggers down that way. All swamp and sago! And you never seen any of it carried up to the stores, either, not in daylight, did you? When was it taken up? Who was it taken to? Where—"

"I dunno. I'd say it couldn't be any mineral, not in that western end, only that you can't say anything's impossible, in this" (briefly described) "country. But it was money's worth of some kind, bless me if it wasn't."

"Any other white people down where he went?"

"Bell River? Not a blank one, only that English toff Lane, that's broke here now in Port."

"Doesn't look as if there was much to be picked up about the Musgrave, if Lane came back broke."

"Doesn't?" (Further star-shells!) "Why, I tell you, that blighter would starve where there was rubber dropping ready made off of the trees, and gold sticking to the toes of his" (blessed) "boots. He's no proof."

"Well,"—the tone was somewhat stiff, as of a man who condescends,—"well, I don't see there's so much in it as you say, but you can have the boat when we've done her usual trip by Yule and them plantations. It's all on the way. Are you coming or not? Got your swag with you?"

"Oh, I've got it; but I'm not coming aboard till terms is fixed a bit better."

"Terms? Dash you, they was fixed. Halves! You know as well as I do it's always halves for grubstaking a man. Why, bless you, what do you want?"

"I tell you, this is worth more. I tell you, I—you've got to give more. Why, it's a dead bird—we're bound to light on something. Halves, man!"

CAUTIOUSLY, under cover of the waxing quarrel, Lane drew his stiffened limbs up, rose, and padded away on his rubber-soled shoes. He had heard enough. For once in his undecided life, he knew what to do.

Bell River! Well he remembered it. It was there, or within five miles of it, that he had lain rotting in his trading-store, mind mildewing and body slacked down to pulp by the ceaseless, thunderous rains, that scarce left you a chance to print a photograph or to dry a shirt. Lord, how he remembered it—green, green, like something at the bottom of the sea, and poison-black in the swamps, crabs with one black claw and one berry-red, clicking and popping about your feet; the hateful, beautiful arcades of sago-palm, set in mud that stank, and that heaved, at unexpected moments, with the sinister movement of something one had thought to be nothing, surely nothing but a lichen log.

The store—a bark-and-thatch hut set on high poles; trade-goods piled in cases; fiery-eyed natives of the river, with their hair in Topsy-tails, slinking in to trade a dozen nuts for a fragment of tobacco. . . . Rain, rain, and the snarling of the Gulf of Papua upon the river bar. . . . The last man had cut his throat. The man before had wandered off among the swamps and got lost. He himself had bolted just in time.

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Lane plunged the pole again. It struck something smallish, hard, slippery.



"It was out of this wilderness," he said to himself, "that Frognal combed seven hundred pounds in six months!"

But this time it was different. This time he was going to beat somebody to something. He knew the River, as these two men on the jetty did not know it. He had heard of Frognal's place and its abandonment, had always meant to go over and have a look at it some day when the rain held off long enough. Well, now he would go. He would get there first. The *Sir Alfred* launch was due to leave straight for the River next morning. He would beg a passage, and if that proved impossible, stow away. His last chance—his last chance! If Frognal had piled up seven hundred pounds out of something unknown, why, he'd do the same, or die. That was no figure of speech. There were many ways of killing yourself down on the Bell River; and there would be no one there within fifty or sixty miles of swamp and sago and stormy, treacherous sand beach to know or interfere.

DESPAIR shows a man to himself. Walter Lane (you must picture him as five feet six or so, good-looking in a prettyish way, if he had not been so worn and worried; a nice, harmless youth, entirely right in his own environment) hardly believed he was Walter Lane, when he found himself next day in possession of a borrowed ten pounds, and a begged passage, buying goods cautiously (because of his debts) in a little trading-store halfway to Koki. Ten pounds did not go far. He chewed his lip over the prices of tinned meat, of biscuit, sugar, tea.

One might be away for months; one must not starve.

"Look here," offered the proprietor of the store, a sharp young Australian. "Look here, I've some cheap stuff I sell to the nigs at a shilling and twopence a tin all round, unlabeled, chance what's in it. I'll let you have a few dozen."

"Is it all right?"

"Right as rain; I've sampled it. Some of it's old stuff, it's true,—pre-war, I reckon,—but all sound. Mostly meat, but now and then it turns out fruit or something."

"Where does it come from?"

"The Pacific Association Store sells it to me. I don't know where they get it. Dare say from Noumea—you remember the unlabeled meat they sent us during the war. Take it or leave it; it's blank cheap."

"I'll take it, and thankful," said Lane, penciling calculations on a scrap of newspaper. He begged the loan of a boy to carry his goods—he was becoming an expert beggar now—and set off for the town again, well pleased.

The captain, engineer, chief officer and mate of the *Sir Alfred*—his name was Bill Wicks, and there was only one of him—set down Lane in a dinghy off the mouth of the Bell River, without any comment or question. He took it for granted that Lane was going back to the old job, and in any case, he was not curious. A man with no carriers and few stores excites small attention along the Papuan Coast, since it is impossible that he can be out for gold.

Afterward, Bill Wicks, who had a small salary and an expensive family, was heard to swear, with many mouth-filling participles, that he, if he had had the least premonition of what was really in hand, would have "cut it out of him." It was of no use, Wicks maintained, to say that Lane had not known all about it from the very first, and if he didn't tell, he should have been made to. The very idea!

But that comes after.

Lane had not been landed at the nearest point to his own old trading-post; nobody noticed that fact, or things would perhaps have gone differently. He got off in a mangrove swamp not three miles from Frognal's place, and using the few words of Gulf language he had picked up during his stay on the coast, succeeded in hiring a couple of boys to transport his meager stores. Knowing the Gulf villages, he went armed, so that there should be no chance of the carriers bolting with his goods. Among these cannibal tribes, but half broken in, and intensely suspicious of the white man, there was small chance of obtaining food of any kind, should his own stock fail.

Frognal's station was the twin of his own—a long-legged hut standing up in a black swamp, with a log pathway leading to it. Tufts of coarse grass, verdigris-green, rose out of the slime; sago-palms, with scaly trunks and heads of gorgeous plumes, wound off in arcades of indescribable beauty, that seemed as if they must surely open into the elusive fairy paradise that is always, in a tropic forest, just a little farther on. Lane knew that there

was nothing in the heart of that emerald glory but deadly marsh, black snakes and spotted pythons, and the suddenly gaping jaws of the great Gulf crocodile; yet the dream held him for a moment as he dumped down his goods on the high platform of the house, and stood looking in the low afternoon sun down the mimic, lovely road that led to death. You could not have said it lured; it did not care for you nearly enough to do so.

Again the horrible un-caringness of these wild places rushed over the man in a fierce wave like the tidal bore of the Turama, sweeping away all else. He paid the boys, went into the ruinous little house and wedged the door tight.

In the morning, he managed to hunt up a native formerly employed by Frogmal, and questioned him exhaustively. The boy had not very much to tell. The white chief, he said, had not kept the store well, but had spent most of his time pulling about the coast in a dinghy, fishing. He did not fish well, either, and seldom had anything in his bag when he came home, though he used to be very dirty. He fished mostly about the bay that could be seen from the store landing-place, and it was not a good bay for fish, anyhow; the boy—hopping from one foot to the other as he talked, and swinging the long fiber tail that he wore attached to his waist—was of opinion that sorcery was carried on by the white man, not fishing. He was a sorcerer; all the Gulf knew that; and they were afraid of him. Followed sundry accounts, given with much prancing and tail-wagging, of magic feats that Lane readily recognized as conjuring tricks. It seemed clear that, for some reason or other, the late Frogmal had been anxious to keep the natives away from his fishing-place.

"Of course he wasn't fishing," mused the ex-bank-clerk to himself as he sat alone that night cooking his economical supper. "What was he getting, and

where? This place is all mud and mangrove and sago. There isn't, and never was, anything in it worth two-pence halfpenny, except the bit of copra the natives make."

The days passed; he hunted in the bush; he canoed about the swamps and in the open estuary of the river. And still there was no clue. And every day those two men whom he had overheard on the jetty were creeping nearer and nearer to him up the coast. He had come direct, in a quick launch; they were coming by way of many villages, in a sailing ketch. That was all the start he had, and if it failed, Hobbs and Garstrake (he had found

out their names) would be just as likely to find out the secret as he—perhaps likelier. He knew the Bell and its natives; he could speak something of the language; but what did that avail against the hard-bitten determination, the driving power of these tough New Guinea pioneers? Lane, looking into the scrap of shaving-mirror left behind by Frogmal of mysterious memory, saw once again that he was no pioneer. Pioneers never had prettyish faces and small mouths, and—why, he had a complexion, a cursed complexion like a silly girl. A pioneer with a complexion!

He remembered a scrap of poetry seen in some American magazine that had done its part toward hounding him into the wilds:

They mouth and murmur, they dream and dally,
Counting the ashes of long dead years.
But ye go down to the mystic valley,
Brave-hearted pioneers. . . .
They have forgotten they ever were young;
They hear your songs as an unknown tongue;
But Death itself to your pride defers,
Adventurers, O adventurers!



In the morning he managed to hunt up a native formerly employed by Frogmal, and questioned him exhaustively.

He was no adventurer; he felt it now, with the sago-swamps about him, and the lonely Gulf before him. How was he going to wrest Frogmal's secret from this untamed wilderness?

Day followed day. He took a canoe out, and paddled up and down the endless arcades of mangrove at high tide, looking for signs of he did not know what. He ventured, heart in mouth, across the bay to the island

opposite to an inner sweep of coast, where Frogmal had been used to spend many hours—so the boy who worked with Frogmal told him. It was low tide when he went out; the hideous mangrove flats were bare and reeking, and all over them the red-clawed crabs and the blue crabs and the gray, who will pick a man's bones if they find him helpless and wounded on the shore, scuttered and clicked.

The island was like other islands (Continued on page 112)



"John Remalie, here with these citizens a-listenin', I want to tell you you're a liar and a hypocrite."

The Story So Far:

AT the death of Dorcas Remalie's wealthy father, she found that his will placed her under the guardianship of her uncle, John Remalie, a New England lumber-king who for twenty-five years had lived in a big, grim stone house with only his housekeeper Miss Labo for company—and in all those twenty-five years they had never exchanged a word.

One day Dorcas overheard Miss Labo talking with a young man while Remalie was absent. John Remalie, it seemed, had carried on an "affair" with Miss Labo in his youth, although he was engaged to another young woman. When he learned from Miss Labo that there was to be a child, he insisted that it be put out of the way. Miss Labo pretended to agree and told Remalie the child had been murdered, while she had it cared for secretly. As the price of silence, she had compelled him to break off his engagement and support her. . . . The young man to whom Miss Labo was talking was, she told him, the child—her son. Later Dorcas heard Miss Labo's visitor leaving and looked out the window, to recognize Jevons, an attractive young man who had distinguished himself by defeating Remalie's walking-boss Sloane in a fight—Sloane, a coarse fellow whom Miss Labo invited to the house and introduced to Dorcas.

Jevons now appeared as a rival to Remalie—bought a tract of timber, set up a sawmill and brought in workmen who had served

Conflict

By
Clarence
Budington
Kelland

Illustrated by Frank Street

with him as foresters in France. And now Remalie received another blow: in a moment of anger Dorcas told him what she had overheard—that his son still lived, that he was none other than the hated rival lumber operator Jevons.

Remalie hated Jevons, his son or not. And he told Dorcas in Miss Labo's presence that he had changed his will, cutting her off entirely if she married anyone possessing a drop of Remalie blood. . . . At this Miss Labo, too, changed her plans: her son would not profit by marriage with Dorcas—indeed Dorcas stood in their way. When, however, she fed something to a little bear-cub which Jevons had given Dorcas, and next morning the cub died, Dorcas became suspicious. And when a dish of poisonous mushrooms was served to Dorcas, she contrived to appear to eat without doing so, then slipped out of the house and went for counsel to her friend Letty Piggott, the village librarian. Letty sent her secretly for refuge to the home of her sixty-year-old adorer Fabius Ginger, who with his two gigantic and ancient brothers Hannibal and Hasdrubal lived by themselves in a remote place in the forest. There Dorcas was presently discovered by two persons, by Sloane, who was driven off by the Ginger brothers, and by Jevons. And Dorcas in spite of her belief in Jevons' origin, confessed her love for him.

Sloane reported to Remalie his discovery of Dorcas' whereabouts, and bargained with Remalie for Dorcas in marriage; Sloane, in return, was to put Jevons out of the way.

CHAPTER XXV

WINTER was flowing into spring; lakes were filling; rivers, bursting through the ice which had encased them for long months, roared and foamed and lashed their banks in the dementia that comes to them once a year. Only on sheltered hillsides and the rarer heights of the mountains did snow remain, and underfoot the woods became a quagmire. Winter does not give up its life easily or gracefully in the woods; Spring is born a weakling, sickly, unsightly, giving little promise of the sturdy beauty soon to be achieved. Even the sun shines damply. The forest was dank, depressing. Nothing remained as it should be, pure, inspiring, giving forth eternal promise, except the mountain which reared its head in calm beauty, unconcerned with seasons, indifferent to ephemeral change.

Back in the camps men and teams wallowed to and fro over roads which were rivers of mud. Corduroy lifted from its bed and floated, a menace to horses' legs.

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The boats crashed, quarter against quarter. A descending oar hurled the leader of the enemy into the lake.

The woodsman became amphibious. His habitat was no longer the forest but the borders of the streams and the streams themselves; with the season, he was taking on the season's identity, exchanging ax and saw for pike-pole and cant-dog. Soon he would forsake his camp in the woods for the temporary wangans which marked the pathway of the drive, sleeping in an old barn, if one chanced to be near, or in a tent with a roaring fire at the opening, or under a lean-to of boughs, and laboring from dark till dark in rushing, icy water, in rips and rapids and under falls down which huge logs shot with the speed of arrows, grunting like live things as they struck against the rocks upon the river's bed. Soon the night's sleep would be horrible with such dreadful, chest-rending coughing as the conditions produced. Presently the woods would reëcho with the bark of dynamite, and men sitting about at night before their leaping fires would describe miraculous escapes—or hazard speculations as to what would become of the widow. Spring in the woods is not a time of light and joy.

Already John Remalie's logs and Jevons' logs had been broken out of yard and rollway, and great booms enclosing spruce and pine and hemlock were being kedge; across Big Sluice Lake by laborious "head-works"—anchored rafts upon which were mounted powerful windlasses. The drive was begun.

But even now, notwithstanding the endless labors of the day, the strain of constant vigilance, the difficulty of the journey, Jevons splashed through the woods nightly to the farm of the Ginger brothers, and the Ginger brothers retired to the kitchen with ponderous tact, leaving the parlor to Jevons and Dorcas. In the kitchen they talked in rumbling whispers, as if afraid their ordinary tones would disturb or destroy something in the room beyond too tender and fragile to endure the impact of sound. If the truth were to be told, they were overweeningly proud of the love-affair which dwelt beneath their roof.

DORCAS admitted Jevons. He entered, debonair, carrying himself lightly, joyously, as if he had not completed a day of wearing labor, and a tramp of five miles through muddy woods. There was resident in him something of the pagan youth of the infant world, something which antedated civilization and derived from Pan and Faunus and the dryads whose homes were in the trees of the forest. He was always gay, even in his most serious moments; one felt how quick with life he was, how unconsciously he expressed his joy at being alive. Dorcas worshiped him as if he had been Faunus himself and she the favored among the devotees.

For Dorcas had forgotten! There were times when she was convinced she had been translated to another world, where the facts and suspicions and evils of the old world could not exist. To her, Jevons was Jevons. He stood alone, untouched, a being of spontaneous origin. Nothing mattered but her love for Jevons, her fears for Jevons, her solicitude for his well-being and comfort. How it had been wiped away, by what magic, she could not say, did not attempt to say, but dread of knowing the truth of his origin no longer resided in her soul, nor certainty that he was her uncle's son. It did not matter.

"Take off your Mackinaw. Come to the fire. I have hot coffee waiting for you," she said all in a breath.

He touched her hair caressingly. "What is fire and food?" he said gayly. "What have I to do with such nonsense? You're here, my dear, and you are fire and food. You're a spring, my dear, always flowing comfort and rest, whatever a man most needs."

"I think a flow of coffee from the pot will be more practical just at this minute," she said, but her eyes glowed with happiness. "Sit right here. You're wet. You'll catch your death o' cold."

"No. Here—where you can sit close by me."

"And you can tell me everything—everything that has happened today, and if you've had time to think about me, and what you've thought—"

"I don't remember thinking of anything else. It seems as if you were with me always—as if I could touch you. Sometimes I can see you."

"I am with you. Oh, you don't know it, but I'm there, tagging you around. I send myself off to be with you—like one of those Hindoo thingumbobs. I've just learned how to do it."

He did not smile at her fancy; indeed, one might suppose he believed it to be truth. Perhaps he did believe it to be true. There are mysteries and wonders in the forest of which huddled city-dwellers cannot dream. . . . Who is there to say that Dorcas was not with Jevons, had not been led by love to a certain occult perfection?

However, Dorcas and Jevons did not philosophize about love; they possessed it.

"If," said Dorcas presently, "I'm to be a woodsman's wife, I must know all about his business. Tell me what you are doing, and why—all of it, down to the tiniest detail. I want to be able to make pictures for myself, at any hour, of exactly what you are doing. Now begin."

"I'll show you," he said, taking pencil and tracing upon a leaf of his notebook. "See—here's Big Sluice Lake. Here at the southerly point, in this cove, is the sluice and dam through which the lake flows into the river. I'm logging to the northwest. Remalie is logging to northeast and southeast. But I'm logging off here to the west too, around Grindstone Pond."

"But you can't get those logs to the lake, can you?"

"No. That's my insanity, so Orrin Lakin and the wise ones say. Look here. Taradiddle Brook runs out of Grindstone, and joins the river here below Three-step Falls. There's where my logs are going."

"Why?"

"Because Remalie would dispute the river with me, and I can take no chances. He has five men to my two. He owns the law. I've got to get my logs down—or your uncle loses a competitor."

"You mean you—you're *busted* if your drive doesn't reach the mill?"

"All busted to pieces. I've obligations—that option on the mountain. I've got to make my first payment before the end of this month, or Remalie gets it—and then good-bye forever to the forest reservation. So I've planned a plan."

"Which is?"

"Look here—at this spot. Years ago there used to be two streams flowing out of Big Sluice Lake, one dropping down into Grindstone Pond. It was dammed and stopped, deflecting all to the river. But the old course of the stream remains, a natural spillway through a gorge of rock. Men have forgotten it, but I discovered it. Not even my bosses know of my scheme. Do you see it? I'll give Remalie plenty of water to get his drive out of the lake. Meantime, very slyly, I've built a sluice and a gate at the old spillway. Not a log of mine shall go down the river. My cut is all in Grindstone Pond, with the exception of the fraction in the lake. When I'm ready, I'll open the gates, and the drive will go down Taradiddle. Surprise party! I'll play fairly with Remalie, and give him water. There's enough for two. I've got my sluice hidden under tops and slashings. It's ready."

"Oh, it's splendid. I should like to see Uncle's face when he discovers it."

"We're ready to start. Remalie begins sluicing logs tomorrow."

"Tomorrow? And he says your drive shan't go down! Oh, be careful, dear. Be careful. Now is the time of danger. You shouldn't have come tonight. You mustn't come again—through the dark woods. If anything should happen to you! I'm not thinking of myself alone, dear, but with you gone—we'd lose the mountain. Nobody else could see your drive through. We'd fail."

JEVONS smiled. "If anything happens to me," he said, "you're the boss. I'll expect you to see the work done." He chuckled and lifted her hand to his lips.

Dorcas sat suddenly erect. "Sweetheart," she said, "if anything happens to you, I will take your drive down. I'll see it gets there. I'll beat Uncle John, and if he hurts you, I'll—"

Jevons looked at her quizzically, tenderly. "Of course you will," he said, "but you mustn't look so fierce. You frighten me."

She sat tense and silent. "I could do it! If anybody should take you away from me, I don't know what I *could* do. I'm not the same. I've changed. Do you remember me when I came? What has happened to me? I could be hard, dear, and revengeful. Once I wanted to see a man killed. Your woods have done something to me."

"They've made you very dear."

"They've uncivilized me."

"What is civilization?" Jevons said gayly. "An education in futility. We caught you just in time, my dear. The barbarian was almost dead in you, but we brought her back to life. We've fanned her and worked her arms. She belonged to you, by rights, by the last will and testament of your grandmothers. This civilization was cheating you out of yourself—but now you are *you*, and I thank God for it!"

The clock struck presently, ten times.

"I must go," said Jevons. "Ten o'clock. It's an unheard-of hour for this country. The Gingers must be dead for sleep. Wonderful chaperons, aren't they?"

"Must you go, dear? Can't you stay here? We can find a bed for you." She walked to the window and peered out at the

night. "It's black," she said with a little intake of the breath. "It's horribly black. Oh, you mustn't go; I'm afraid." He could feel her trembling as she clung to him and gazed up into his face with frightened eyes. "Please—oh, please!"

"What could hurt me, sweet? Aren't you going along with me? Didn't you tell me you could send yourself with me?"

"I can. I will. . . . But—the drive starts tomorrow. It's the time. . . . Stay, oh, stay!"

He shook his head. "I must be on the work before sunup. What would my men think of me? The woods are kind to me, Dorcas. I belong to the woods."

"So do panthers and wolves."

He lifted her in his arms. "Only for a few days, dear. Then—then I'll have you always, see you always. You mustn't worry." He drew on his Mackinaw. "Good night, sweet. Dream of me."

Her lips were cold as he pressed them, her eyes dark with fear.

"If any harm should come to you—"

"I'd expect you to take my place," he said with a gay laugh, "and be boss of the river. Good night! Good night!"

STANDING in the doorway, hatless and coatless, Dorcas strained her eyes after Jevons' departing form until Fabius Ginger drew her inside.

"Git your death o' cold," he said sternly.

"I'm afraid—afraid," she said.

"Afeard of what, Dorkis? What's scairt ye?"

"The night and the woods. He shouldn't have come. He shouldn't have come alone."

"Him? He's safe as a squirrel, Jevons is. Now you git you to bed and sleep. That young feller kin take care of himself. Not but what I'm mighty jealous of him, at that. Right up to bed, young woman."

Dorcas ascended to her room, but not to bed. She crouched on the floor before her window and stared out into the blackness, striving to compel her eyes to show her that long trail which Jevons' feet were traversing—setting her will against misfortune, guarding him by her thoughts, protecting him with her love. The room grew cold, and she wrapped herself in a blanket, still keeping her post at the window. And there dawn awakened her.

"Don't look very pert this mornin'," Hannibal remarked as she came down to the kitchen.

She stopped, laid her head against his gigantic chest, and clung to him. "Oh, nothing has happened. Nothing could happen. Could anything happen?"

"Course not. What's to happen?"

"I've got to know. Will one of you take me to the pond today? I can't rest till I know he's safe."

"To be sure, honey. You'll be took wherever you want to go. Right plumb after breakfast." The old fellow turned to Fabius. "Say, what wouldn't you give to have a perty girl worritin' about you in sich a manner?" he demanded.

"Millions," said Fabius, "millions!"

Dorcas could not eat; she could think only of those black, dank woods, of the rushing river, of the jagged rocks against



This was the spot, she knew. He had been overpowered and hurled helpless to the hungry serpent below.

which the torrent lashed, of the Jaws down which the current swept black and relentless, taking upon itself the seeming of some monster serpent. It was not the forces of nature, nor the perils of nature she feared, but the uses to which they might be brought by the venom of man. Her heart beat with uncontrollable haste; she experienced a sense of breathlessness, a quivering need for action, movement. Fear compelled her to impatience; delay was not to be endured.

"Let's start. Let's start now," she said again and again.

"No good never come of startin' on an empty stummick," said Fabius.

With what seemed to Dorcas exasperating slowness, Fabius got into rubber shoe-pacs and Mackinaw. Dorcas was already waiting, dressed for such a walk as was before her.

"Calc'late we kin start to commence now, Dorkis," he said, and they left the house. Fabius turned back to nod significantly and to wink with delight at his brothers. It was a joy to them, this love-affair which had come to blossom on their doorstep.

They had not reached the road when a lumberjack floundered out of the mud of the river trail and splashed toward the house. At sight of him they stopped, awaiting his approach.

"Where's the boss?" he demanded morosely. Dorcas' fingers clutched Fabius' arm. It seemed to her that life was arrested in her, that she stood cold, dead, a pillar of ice to endure on that spot through the centuries.

"What boss?" said Fabius.

"Jevons! Didn't he come here last night? Said he was goin' to. Said he'd be back by midnight. Haint showed up yet. Thought maybe he stopped somewheres below, but the haint no sign of him. He's needed."

Fabius stared down at Dorcas an instant before replying. "Left here at ten las' night," he said heavily. Instinctively, he seemed, he gathered Dorcas up in his huge arms as if she were a hurt child, and stood holding her so. "Taint nothin', honey. Taint nothin'. Not to git scared of. He's jest stopped some'ers. Haint he, you? Haint he?"

"He haint," said the man stubbornly. "If he left here las' night, he haint never got nowhere. That's what. And if he haint got nowhere, what's become of him, eh? Tell me that. Somebody's got to tell me that, and the rest of the boys too. Somebody's goin' to tell us, you kin bet."

"Dorkis," said Fabius softly, "you lemme put you back in the house, and then me an' the boys'll start off to see what we kin see. We'll run acrost him suug as a bug in a rug some'ers. Nothin' to worry about."

"Put me down, please," said Dorcas. "I'm going. I—I'm going to find him."

As she spoke, she was conscious of a certain strangeness, an unreality, as if she were a bystander watching and listening to herself. She was numb; yet that other Dorcas whom she watched was sharply alert, was suffering pain, was—and this was strange, too—burning with rage. Somehow that Dorcas felt it was too late for grief or anxiety; that nothing would serve but rage and vengeance. She had said she would find him, but she knew she could not find him—not Jevons, debonair, joyous, faunlike. What she might find would not be Jevons.

She was not a frightened, trembling girl now, but a woman, hard, thinking clearly, determined, implacable. It was a phase which would pass, to be succeeded by emotions more womanly, by stifling grief; but it was there, to be utilized so long as she could hold herself in hand. At once she took upon herself leadership.

"Call out your brothers," she said, "—with guns. Hurry."

"Hey, inside!" bellowed Fabius obediently. "All out in there and fetch your shootin' irons. Hustle!"

Hannibal and Hasdrubal appeared almost instantly, faces set and expectant.

"He—is gone," said Dorcas. "He left—but he never arrived! Be quick!"

She took the lead up the river trail. "I'll know the place when I come to it," she said, and big men though they were, it put them to it to keep pace with her. One mile, two, they traversed, and now in their ears was the rush and roar of the mighty current pouring blackly down through the jaws of the Rips. Here, close to the shelf of overhanging granite, the young spruce grew thick and matted, brushing the path. Here men might lurk in hiding but an arm's-length from one who traversed the path, and their presence be unsuspected even by day. Dorcas paused. "It was here," she said.

She spoke as one informed, and her words impressed belief. "See what you can learn," she said, herself walking to the apex of the jutting rock and looking down at that smooth, sinuous, serpentine, endless catapult of water shooting irresistibly down the incline to the rock-strewn rapids below. It fascinated her, held her. This was the spot. She knew! He

had been seized back yonder, overpowered, dragged to this pinnacle, and hurled helpless, unconscious, to the hungry serpent below. She could see the thing enacted—see Jevons' body, borne half-afloat in the grip of the torrent, shooting down the slope to plunge and disappear in the yellowish, wave-tossed foam of the Rips. Fabius touched her arm.

"The' was five of 'em," he said grimly. "They waited in yonder, clost together. The ground's all trompled up like he fought 'em long and hard."

"He would fight long and hard," she said.

He cleared his throat, and stared down at the Rips. "We haint able to find," he said in a voice that pleaded forgiveness for putting the thing into words, "that but five went away ag'in."

She nodded. It had needed no telling. "You three," she said, "go down the river. You understand. Go as far as you have to."

Fabius nodded. He comprehended. There was no guessing where that spring freshe' would deign to toss ashore the body of a man. They might have to seek far.

"And I," said Dorcas, "will go on with this man."

"Where?"

"To the Pond."

"What fer?"

She looked at him with surprise. "Why," she said, "to take his place. It's what he expected of me."

"You're goin' back home," he declared.

Dorcas turned on him furiously, savagely; she was a wild thing, fired by such primeval emotion as moves the mother bear at loss of her cub. "Do as you're told," she said, crouching, fists clenched. Hannibal backed away, aghast. "Now!" she said. "Now! Be about it."

Fabius glanced at Hannibal, who nodded. "Best do it," he said in a whisper. "Let her go. Harm can't come of it, and good may. Nobody kin help her—nobody but Gawd and her own courage."

They turned away reluctantly, but as she saw their backs, Dorcas softened, weakened momentarily. She threw out her hands to them beseechingly, protestingly. "He said the woods were kind," she cried. "He said the woods would be kind to him!"

CHAPTER XXVI

FOR two miles more Dorcas and her companion followed the river trail, exchanging no word, plodding through mire, scrambling over outcropping rocks, stumbling over the insecurity of submerged corduroy. A roaring brook, a dozen feet wide, impeded their way, a brook of gray, icy, swirling waters, spanned by the riverman's bridge—a single spruce lying from bank to bank. Dorcas' companion drew abreast of her as if to offer assistance, but she did not seem aware of the precarious footing, crossing at a half-run, the heels of her shoe-pacs well centered in true riverman fashion, as if she had run logs from childhood. Thus

(Continued on page 126)



He stared, scowling. "Well, where is he? Find him?"



To hide what he felt, he said lightly: "You're a first-rate pal, Honey."

Mirage

By Mildred Cram

Illustrated by Frank Spradling

WHEN the servant had taken the coffee-things out, Mrs. Everett yawned behind her hand and said: "Well, Max, it's all right, I suppose—the agreement with McNally?"

Max Everett glanced down at the fire on the hearth, then back at his wife, with a quick, thrusting look. He thought: "How good-looking she is! And how damnably calm!"

"Yes," he said aloud, "everything's quite all right. McNally has come in with us. I have topped my ambition. We are on the crest of success, my dear."

She smiled. "It hasn't been so long, at that. We're young enough to enjoy what we've got—money, position, security. You're happy, Max?"

He was silent for a moment, as if he were weighing his feelings. He sensed the quiet beauty of the room—all of his wife's making: soft walls, black furniture, subdued glow of lamps and candles. And Clara herself, leaning well back in her chair, with white arms silhouetted against the blue of her gown and the firelight on her hair! These things were his own, made for his happiness. Precious things, perhaps. Yet he couldn't be sure.

"I'm wondering whether you'll understand," he said, "what I'm going to try to tell you. I'm not altogether happy—that is, there's still something I want. Oh, the most evanescent and

impossible thing! If you laugh at me, maybe I'll be able to understand it."

"I'm not going to laugh at you, Max."

Again he gave her that thrusting look. "No. You wouldn't. I can talk to you. That's why I've loved you all these years. Before I begin, I want to make it very clear that to me you are all women in one! Stop and think what that means. You're my first love and—all the rest of my loves."

Mrs. Everett laughed, and for the fraction of a second her eyelids fluttered down. "You dear boy! I know. And don't think I'm not grateful. To always have you there—to be sure of you! It's like the world turning around." She lifted her head. "Tell me, Max—what is it you want?"

Everett turned his back to the fire and faced his wife. He was conscious of looking foolish; his face felt hot, and he knew that the light of his thought must have got into his eyes, making them bright and quick, full of a sort of furtive eagerness.

"I don't know," he answered.

"Then it's not dangerous?"

"Very."

Clara Everett moved impatiently. "I don't understand—"

"Perhaps you will, when I've explained. You see me, your husband, your lover, Maxwell Everett, forty years old, success-

ful and happy. Happy, of course! Yet there's a deficit in my soul of souls, a hollow place that's got to be filled, a desert place that must be watered. A very personal, secret place—unimportant, naturally! It's been there always. I'm conscious of it when I'm alone, or when I'm unusually happy—before I go to sleep, or when I'm lying on my back in an open place, looking at the sky. You understand?"

Mrs. Everett's eyes were closed. Her face was expressionless, save for the faint shadow of a smile, just the mere lifting of her lips at the corners. "I don't understand at all," she said.

Everett felt a vague antagonism. He thought: "What a fool I am, trying to explain the inexplicable!" He stared at her again, more conscious of her beauty than he had been for years. Had he taken too much for granted? He could always put his lips against the fine whiteness of her skin, touch her hair, letting the gold strands sift through his fingers like sand, feel pride and pleasure in her fineness, her worldly elegance. Terrible intimacy! She was his with all the obligations possession implies. His own! What if she couldn't understand his dream?

In a hurried, stuttering voice he began again: "I didn't mean to be mysterious. Why, the thing's as clear as daylight—I'm tired out. Too many years wearing a groove between this house and the office. Too many of the same people, the same pleasures, the identical old thrills. Now and then I win a tangible victory—McNally's coming in, for instance. That's good. Now and then I play a decent game of golf. And that's good too."

"Now and then," Clara interrupted, opening her eyes, "you make love to me."

THERE was a short silence, while they stared at each other. Everett was startled by the hostility he felt. He shrugged his shoulders and said: "I gave you my guarantee before I began this confession. You are one of the best things in life. If there is any possibility of my hurting you, I'll everlastingly shut up."

Mrs. Everett shook her head. "You're trying to make the truth palatable. I'd prefer to understand, Max, old dear. Don't tell me how grateful you are for what you have. Tell me what it is you want—and haven't got." She got up and slipped her arm through his, leaning against him. He sensed the familiar perfume of her loveliness—the fragrance of lilac and rose. And putting his fingers through hers, he lifted her hand and held it against his lips. At that moment he was sorry for her, perhaps because for the first time he realized that he could destroy her happiness with a careless word, an unconsidered gesture, a glance. So fragile a thing happiness has become in this day of questioning and seeking! A thread between them—a shining, delicate strand from heart to heart—a gossamer thread from which they must depend the deadly weight of familiarity.

He drew away from her, pretending to go in search of a cigarette. Any excuse would do. He could talk more easily if he were not near her. He found the cigarette, lighted it, and from behind the chair she had left, confronted her again.

"I want to go away—not from you, but from life. I'm stale. I want—Lord knows what I want. I'm too old to believe in adventure. But the kid in us is eternal, I imagine. I've dreamed of getting away from all this—"

"All this?"

"Business—routine—duty. I've had twenty years of it. Lately I have felt like a man in a Ferris wheel—the heights and the depths are unchanging. When I'm at the bottom of the turn, I'm conscious of the staleness of my illusions. When I'm at the top, I strain to see beyond the horizon, hoping for relief. I want to go away—cut loose—kick up my heels. See the world. Talk to men. Travel in ships. Feel the heartbeat of humanity. I want to sit astride a horse and ride for days on end across a blistering desert. I want to stand on high hills and look down into the valleys, where great rivers are no more than a silver thread. I want to hear strange music—smell strange smells—behold strange things. . . . I'm sick to death of the Ferris wheel."

Mrs. Everett looked for a moment at the toe of her blue-satin slipper. An ornament hanging from a chain about her neck struck tiny points of frosty light. When she lifted her eyes, they told Everett nothing. He went on, raising his voice to cover the sudden embarrassment he felt: "I've always wanted to break away. I'm a constitutional vagabond—with a conscience. I hate the things I've got; yet I haven't been able to do without them. Perhaps I'm a coward. There isn't much glory in taking to the highroad when you've got money in the bank and a home to come back to."

He came around the chair, and tossing his cigarette into the fire, possessed himself again of that smooth white hand.

"Well," he asked lightly, "have I hurt you?"

"No." She smiled and very deftly pulled her hand away so that he wasn't sure whether or not she had repulsed him. "You startled me; that's all. I thought, foolishly, that you were content to live this way. After all, how could I have known? These secret things—they frighten me. It's as if you had borne a grudge—in silence. Now I'm helpless, because I wasn't prepared."

Everett saw tears on her cheeks. And suddenly he caught her deeply into his arms with a cry of compassion and remorse. "I'm going to make you understand. Listen! I'm not satisfied with success and safety. It's so damnably easy! I want to chase rainbows for a while. Going after copra in a South Sea trading vessel. Digging for forgotten gods at Quirigua. Following in Beebe's footsteps along the Convict Trail. Risking my neck for an orchid or a beetle in some magnificent jungle. Seeing what Conrad saw—Java and the Malay Archipelago and the black madness of Africa. Smelling the aromatic dust of China. Scrambling over a buried city of the Aztecs. Living—feeling! A lifetime wouldn't be long enough to do all the things I've dreamed of doing! And I've waited fifteen years."

She lifted her head. "Life is right here."

"Detail! I prefer the whole canvas! The whole glorious spectacle. Shiny black men, Afghans and Indians and Englishmen—I've got to talk to them, get under their skins, play their game for a while."

"It's the same game everywhere," she whispered, "—love, hate, birth and death."

He avoided her eyes and said quickly: "You're incorrigible. You prefer to believe that I'm selfish."

"No—only foolish." She drew away from him again and smiled unsteadily. "Oh, my dear, d'you suppose I don't see into your mind? I do—clear to the bottom of it."

"What do you mean?"

Mrs. Everett clasped her hands together with a quick, nervous pressure. The diamond ornament twinkled more brightly with her quick breathing. In the look she gave Everett there was disdain and terror, a sort of begging tenderness, a flash of anger. For the first time he felt profoundly the spiritual difference in their sex; she was humiliated because she loved him; she fought, not for love, but for possession.

With a perceptible shiver, she said: "I understand. You want to go away—without me."

Everett thought: "Yes." The confession hung on his lips. He could hear the words, spoken, irrevocable, challenging her. He could imagine her receiving the blow full on her heart, but without a quiver or a reproach. Then, he knew, she would go with him to the ends of the world. But he was afraid to speak. She appeared so feminine, so vulnerable, so essentially remote. He lied bitterly: "No. You're making a mountain out of a mole-hill, my dear. You'll come with me, of course?"

Without waiting for her answer, he went to his desk and came back with a map. "See here. Lots of bully places to go. Both of us need relief from this deadly familiarity. Look—California! See all these nice crêpy lines—they're mountains, big ones. New Mexico! There's a place on the rim of the desert called Wilkens' Post. Mawson told me about it. Cold nights and hot as blazes at noon. How'd you like to spend six months out there?"

Clara bent over the map. Her bare arm touched his, and he was aware again of that faint fragrance of lilac and rosé. "I'd like to very much," she said.

Everett drew her down beside him in the deep chair, and with the map for inspiration talked of ranch-houses, horses, sunsets and that "canopy of stars" Mawson had told him about. Clara said nothing. Her eyes were closed, and he could feel the beating of her heart beneath his hand—very loud and steady.

IN the middle of the night Everett woke from a restless sleep and heard her crying. For a long time he listened, conscious of an impatience that was almost hatred. She had conquered him, won him away from his dream, bound him again to her weakness, her fragrance, her mystery. Why, in God's name, was she crying? He turned his head and saw the outline of her body—slim and long, still young, victorious! And again he felt pity. Women's hearts were such small places. Incomprehensible! She loved him. She had suffered for him. What had she said? "I can see to the bottom of your heart?"

Stretching out his hand, he touched her. "Clara—my dear! Won't you believe me?"

She did not answer. The sobbing ceased, and she seemed to



Then Staples turned to Everett. "You damn' sneak! I'll kill you for this."

be holding her breath. It was as if she had died beneath his touch. He lay on his side, striving to see her face in the darkness. And the thought came to him: "The old love is dead. The thread's broken. Neither of us will ever be the same again."

Suddenly she whispered: "Go to sleep. I'm all right. My dear!"

WILKENS' POST was indeed on the rim of the desert. A group of ranch-houses, a cluster of dusty trees and a disused corral constituted the settlement. The desert lay about it, unbroken and glittering, and to the north a mountain range, cut like crude sapphires, rose sharply against the clear blue of a cloudless sky. A shimmer of heat hung above the earth, palpable as a mist. Wherever a man walked or rode, he was followed by a spiral of dust, white dust that lay thick upon his shoulders and his boots. And such was the silence that a whisper was noisy, and a dog's bark sounded like the crack of doom—silence penetrating, magnificent, sobering, unbroken as the arch of the sky.

Everett came out on the ranch-house porch that afternoon of their arrival, and stared off at the mountains. Clara did not ride, but he intended to explore those heaped-up pyramids of purple and blue. Magnificent, they were—like Abyssinian monoliths. There must be trails, narrow, shadowy ways into their mysterious heart. Everett wondered whether Wilkens' horses were good. Probably not. The place had become a sort of hotel, a rest-cure for people like themselves who wanted a taste of ranch-life with none of its inconveniences.

Everett went toward the stable, wondering whether he would have come to the place at all if it had not been for Clara. He would have preferred going to Mawson's ranch in Wyoming—but Mawson had skillfully rebuffed him. "It's too rough for ladies. Mrs. Everett wouldn't like it. Better go to Wilkens' Post. Wilkens will give you a bathtub and saddle-horses."

The bathtub was a reality. Everett had left Clara preparing to make use of it to wash away the dust of the long drive across the blistering plain. She had unpacked her trunk, and her smart, well-tailored sports things hung behind the calico curtains which did duty as a closet. Clara had "creamed" her face, making little grimaces of annoyance because the hot sun had burned her skin. The primitive room was already flavored with lilac and rose. An array of silver-topped bottles stood on the pine dresser. A peacock blue negligee lay across a chair. Decidedly, Clara would not have fitted into the Mawson atmosphere. Mawson's men would have had to tune their lute to her ears. And she would have been miserable—was probably miserable now,

although she had said nothing except: "It's stunning, Max. I feel like the heroine of a Wild West melodrama. I'm glad you brought me."

Well, one had to compromise somewhere. Everett supposed that this was better than the deadly routine of the office. He hadn't realized how tired he was—dog-tired. Even his old dreams seemed unimportant, outdistanced by actuality. It was useless to imagine that a man can attain freedom by merely saying: "I want to cut loose." At forty so many practical and highly virtuous adhesions are formed that the operation of enfranchisement is painful. Confronted by the results of his revolutionary impulse, Everett had been terrified. He had had no idea how much a part of him Clara had become. She was not an entity; she was his wife, involved in his actions as surely as he was himself. He could not be happy, apparently, unless she were happy too. His happiness was a thing apart from definite human relationships—he could get it in silence, in loneliness, in brief contact with beauty or violence or pain, in thought, in action. Her happiness was built upon love, exacting, personal, magnificently selfish.

Well, there it was.

He crossed the yard to the stable, intending to choose a horse that would be his during their stay at the Post. The sun was setting, and already the air was faintly tinged with the cool of lengthening shadows. Two men lounged in the stable doorway, and Charley Wilkens himself, a picturesque hat cocked over his nose, sat astride a saddle which had been thrown on the ground.

"Evening, Mr. Everett! This is Jo Quick and Vincent Staples."

The two hands regarded Everett coldly. One of them was an American redhead, gaunt, long and freckled. The other, Jo Quick, was little and swarthy. He took his cigarette out of his mouth, spat and said briefly: "Evening!"

"Like it here?" Wilkens inquired.

"Very much. Mrs. Everett finds it quite comfortable. I shall want to ride. Mr. Mawson told me that you'd have horses."

"Plenty. Come in and look 'em over. The lady don't ride?"

"No."

"Hm. Honoré will have to see you around—my daughter. We call her Honey for short. Nice girl and rides like a man. This is her horse—Bill. You can have any of these three. You're the only visitors here just now, unless you'd call Honoré a visitor. She's been East for two years."

Everett spoke to one of the horses. An unusual and gratifying sense of calm came to him. His nearness to the animals—their soft noses and sleek, warm bodies—stirred and delighted him. He chose a small, restless pony called Tuerto, and let his hand linger on the little chap's neck, establishing friendship. And he thought suddenly: "I can ride. What on earth will Clara do with herself?" He was glad that there was another woman on the place; that would leave him free to explore the blue mirage which lay upon the rim of the horizon.

"Here comes Honey now," Wilkens said.

The two men in the doorway sprang to their feet, tossing their cigarettes away. And glancing out into the yard, Everett saw a woman coming toward them from the house. She moved quickly, taking short, springy steps and swinging her arms. Everett couldn't see her face under her hat.

"Honey," Wilkens called, "come in here."

She came, pausing to say a quick "Evening!" to Jo Quick and Vincent Staples.

"This is Mr. Everett. Came today. I told him you'd show him over the landscape."

Then Everett saw her. She was small and dark, dark enough to be colored by Spanish or Sicilian blood. Not pretty, but somehow a very reassuring little person. Her hand in Everett's was charged with vitality—he felt it in the pressure of her fingers.

"You ride?" she asked.

"Yes."

"I'm going out now. I'll take you (Continued on page 90)



"I can't let you go to Daylight alone," he repeated. "I've got to learn to do things alone," she answered.



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Everett hesitated. He was not accustomed to doing things that Clara did not know about. "Why, thanks—it's awfully good of you. But I told Mrs. Everett—"

"Just as you say."

She turned away without a trace of annoyance or chagrin; casually, as a man would have accepted his excuse, she dismissed him. Jo and Vincent helped her to saddle Bill. Everett watched, acutely embarrassed and angry. He wanted to go with her. Why in God's name hadn't he jumped at the chance?

"Let go," Honey shouted.

She tossed her hat to Jo, laughed and gave Bill his head. Together they crossed the yard, passed like a flash through the gate and flew toward the setting sun.

CLARA came to the supper-table looking refreshed and eager. She wore a white dress which clarified her pallor, and Everett noticed that her hands were bare of rings. He thought: "She's always well bred." He was proud, as always, of her cool perfection.

The dining-room was a bare, white-washed room without ornament of any sort. A single long, narrow table seated the guests, Wilkens himself, the two hands and a taciturn traveling salesman who had come out from the nearest town to sell Wilkens a new supply of china and glassware. An oil lamp swung from the ceiling and cast a round pool of light upon the table. The windows were open, and a cool breeze stirred the curtains. Everett was unaccountably happy. He liked the informality of the meal, the coarse crockery, the colored-glass vinegar cruets, the red table-cover. Clara was accepting it very well—this transition from luxury to simplicity. She laughed with Wilkens and spoke affably to the traveling salesman.

Honoré came in late. There was dust on her shoulders, and her brown hair had been loosened by the wind. She passed Everett and took her place next to Wilkens, directly within the circle of lamplight, so that Everett saw the flame of color in her cheeks and the brilliance of her eyes.

"My daughter, Mrs. Everett."

Clara smiled. In the look she gave Honoré there was no appraisal, only an amiable curiosity. Yet Everett was instantly conscious that Honoré had glanced down at her dusty blouse and had put her hands in her lap; she frowned, lifted her head and called down the table to Vincent Staples:

"I went to Camulos, Vin. Here's a letter for you."

Staples cackled. "Give it to me."

She tossed the letter to him, and turning to Clara with the same quick lift of her head, said: "I hope you're going to like it here, Mrs. Everett."

"I'm certain to," Clara answered, "if Mr. Everett is happy. I'm not an out-of-doors person myself. I don't ride, and I don't like walking—I prefer a hammock in a shady place."

"Oh, we can fix that for you," Honey said. "There's a clump of trees down by the corral,—you know, Dad,—and I've

got a hammock. It's not much to look at, but it's comfortable."

"Thank you." Clara's smile might have meant anything—gratitude, amusement or dismissal. Everett was annoyed because she said nothing more. Yet there was no fault to find with her graciousness. And he was grateful, when they strolled a little way into the starry darkness after supper, that Clara did not mention Honoré, except to say: "She's a pretty girl, that daughter of Wilkens."

Everett felt mysteriously glad to be able to say: "Pretty? I don't think so."

"Oh, but she is. A magnificent body and a piquant face. She isn't happy."

"What makes you think so?"

"She's hunting for something. Women see those things in other women. Men only sense them."

Everett laughed. He put his hand under Clara's chin and tipped her head back. "Look at the stars." While she looked, he stooped quickly and kissed her. . . .

In the morning the first ray of light pierced the window blind like a white arrow and stabbed him into consciousness. He rose immediately and dressed, tiptoeing so as not to disturb Clara. He could not remember when he had seen the sun rise. It would be a sensation, an experience.

No one was about downstairs, and he went outside, closing the door cautiously behind him. The sky was as colorless as a crystal globe; earth, trees, fences and houses were all a dense black, silhouetted against this blazing whiteness. A long cockcrow lingered in the still air with a curious semblance of echo and re-echo. And as if the sound were a signal for the approach of day, the western sky flushed scarlet in a fan-shaped semicircle. Through the heart of this radiance flickering bands of intense gold climbed toward the apex of the sky and seemed to spray the east with blue, where a moment before there had been nothing but crystal. Everett saw the mountains—purple-black, rimmed with fire.

Everett watched. He was contemptuous of himself in the face of this vast impersonality. Dawn and silence are violent medicine for the spirit, and Everett was not accustomed to either. He thought: "How many sunrises I've missed! How much beauty I've never seen! The things I haven't done that I might have done! The things I might have felt that I haven't felt—the chances I've missed—the sensations I've never had! I've grown cowardly with postponement. I wonder if I could live if I tried?"

He left the porch and crossed the yard, facing the direct glare of the sun. The stable door was open, and he went in, saddling Tuerto himself, awkwardly because the matter was strange to him.

He rode straight toward the mountains. There were no roads across the sand, only a sort of blind trail, now visible, now obscured by patches of grass. The mountains, he knew, would recede before him like an elusive mirage; he'd have to tackle them with a certain amount of formality. Tackle them he would. He made that a point of honor with himself. At that moment he felt sure that once in the deep-sliced cañons, once toiling across the stony flanks of

that unfamiliar range, he could free himself of Clara without hurting her and gain for himself the isolation of spirit he knew to be essential to happiness, to progress and to integrity. Both of them would be safer. Selfish love was an abomination.

He was annoyed when he saw that he was not the only one who had risen for the dawn. Another rider was weaving in and out of the cactus mazes—Honoré, on Bill. She came up to Everett in a cloud of dust, drew rein and said:

"Watch out you don't go too far. This country's deceiving."

Everett laughed. "You can't very well lose the ranch."

"No? Look behind you."

He turned in the saddle. The group of houses, which he had supposed were visible for miles in every direction, had disappeared.

"This side of the desert's like a petrified ocean," Honey explained. "You know how a ship disappears behind a big wave? The ranch is over there, but you might ride for an hour without catching sight of it. I saw you'd taken Tuerto, so I followed."

He stared at her until she turned her eyes away.

"Have you ever been to the mountains?" he asked.

"Those yonder? Once. There's no water. My father went in with some prospectors when I was a kid; and they took me along because I cried to go." She turned her eyes upon Everett again. "They're not blue when you get to them."

"Perhaps not. But your telling me so doesn't discourage me. I want to find out for myself."

She laughed. "I'm like that too. I went to New York, to find out for myself."

"To find out what?"

"If it was a city or a dream. I learned. Houses—millions of houses! Taken separately, they were like houses here—or anywhere. Together, they had a soul. I couldn't understand it. London must be like that—Paris, Rome. Something more than cities—horrible!"

"You like this?"

"This is mine," she explained.

Suddenly she spoke to Bill, wheeled and dashed back toward the ranch. Everett followed. He felt a definite challenge in her flight.

THEY rode together every morning. Honey knew the country and loved it. She showed Everett the way to Camulos, a sun-baked village five miles to the south. She took him, too, to an Indian settlement which lay almost within the shadow of the mountains.

Honey spoke the dialect of the region—shyly, in Everett's presence. She was not the sort to be proud of an accomplishment.

Everett watched her with deepening admiration. He thought: "I'd prefer to ride with one of the men. But this woman doesn't bother me."

She did bother him, nevertheless, perhaps because she made no effort to intrigue him. She was as indifferent and as good-humored as a boy. Exploration exhausted, she met him quite simply for



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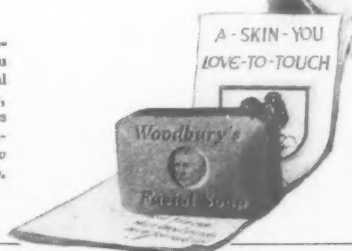


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the morning ride as far as the Well and back again. Once she said to him:

"I hope you don't mind my coming along. I like to talk to you."

For answer Everett put his hand over hers where it rested on Bill's sleek neck. He was startled by the quick flood of color that rose from her throat to her forehead. Her hand was quiet, and he drew his own away, stirred by the contact, embarrassed and uneasy. To hide what he felt, he said lightly: "You're a first-rate pal, Honey."

She gave him a curious look, a look both beseeching and imperious, and what Clara had said flashed through his mind: "She's hunting for something." The look died; she smiled, and putting her hand on her throat as if to hide the blush, she said unsteadily: "Don't let anyone hear you calling me Honey. Dad wouldn't like it."

Everett knew that she was thinking, not of her father, but of Vincent Staples. The big hand was in love with her. He followed her about with a begging, threatening look in his pale-blue eyes. Everett had often come upon them, the girl indifferent and bored, Vincent Staples whispering—always whispering, as if he were offering her his prodigious ugliness.

Clara's hammock had been swung in the meager shade of the trees near the corral, and Everett spent every afternoon there, reading aloud, or sleeping, with his head on his coat and his arms flung over his eyes to shut out the glaring blue of the sky. If he could not sleep, he thought of Honoré. He could remember every expression of her body—the quick lift of her head, her walk, the way she used her hands. He was not in love with her. He was sure of that. But he did not want anyone else to be.

Clara was very unaware of all this. While Everett read aloud, she swung idly in Honoré's canvas hammock and watched his face. Her glance dwelt on the smile that had settled permanently on his lips, the new eagerness in his eyes. And Everett, becoming conscious of her scrutiny, said: "Hang it all, Clara! Why do you watch me like that?"

"Was I? I beg your pardon. There's so little to look at—"

He exploded suddenly: "So little! Sunrise and sunset and a million beauties out there—"

"You forget that I—"

He shook his head. "You don't see the beauty; that's all!"

"It isn't my fault, Max dear, that I am what I am. I like candlelight and cut flowers, witty people, old furniture, motorcars. I prefer a symphony orchestra to the yowl of a coyote. I prefer a good play to all the humble tragedies of humanity. I like civilization plus the patina of centuries. I'm not a crude product and never will be."

Everett said quickly: "We'll go back."

"Not yet! You're happy out here. That's all I ask. Don't be silly!"

A WEEK later Everett told Honoré that he was going to the mountains. They were riding toward the Well, through the scarlet glow of sunrise. She lifted her head and said: "I'd like to go with you."

"Well, why not?" Everett asked, unsteadily.

"You know well enough why not. If I were a man, I'd go with you quick enough. I like your mind. We've got things to talk about." Suddenly she brought her hand down on Bill's neck with a sharp slap. "We're not people. We're a man and a woman. I hate the thought of it."

"I don't hate it," Everett said. "Neither do you. You're not telling the truth."

Honoré flushed; in her glance there was a flash of bitter anger and resentment. "Well, then, let's tell the truth."

Her voice broke. Before the look in Everett's eyes her lids fluttered down. She took the hand he held out to her, and leaning sideways in the saddle, gave him her lips.

"Forgive me," he said, "forgive me, Honey!"

She drew away from him and sat erect again with closed eyes. "I made you. I wanted you to. I guess it's because I love you."

"You mustn't say that."

"Are you afraid of it? You needn't be. I know what you're thinking. I can see way down into your thoughts—clear down." She smiled and spoke softly to Bill. "I'm going to ride on to the Well. You needn't follow."

"I'll follow," Everett said shortly.

HONEY was gone like a brown flash. At Bill's heels little spurts of dust exploded and drifted over the grass, powdering it thickly. The sun was rolling upward through a broad band of mist that obscured all but the massive pedestals of the range.

Everett's heart was beating violently. Honoré's kiss had crystallized his vague emotional need; he saw now what his conception of life had been—he had wanted the dance without paying the piper. Now he would pay the piper—to prove, one way or the other, that he was not a coward. "I shall hurt them both," he thought, "and lose everything myself. Desire and compassion—"

Honoré was waiting by the shallow, brackish pool known as the Well. She had taken off her hat and sat with her arms clasped around her knees. She did not stir when Everett dropped down beside her and said: "Must I be ashamed of loving you? I do."

"You needn't be ashamed of anything."

He took her hand and held it between both of his, surprised by the smallness and brownness of it, remembering Clara's smooth white fingers with the tapering, rosy nails. This girl's hand was strong and vital; her clasp gave him courage, to hurt her if necessary—somehow he felt that she was familiar with pain. Clara was not. Honoré's cheeks were smooth. He was close to the brightness of her crisp, short hair, her fine brows, the scarlet of her mouth.

Honoré caught her breath and whispered: "Don't kiss me again unless you mean to suffer with me."

"I mean to," Everett said.

For a moment he forgot everything in his pity, and tipping her head back against his arm, he kissed her as though he were kissing the embodiment of his dreams, with passion, with reverence and with despair.

THEY rode back slowly, saying little. The sun was blistering hot. The horses walked with heads held low, their flanks glossy with sweat.

Vincent Staples was waiting in the yard. He caught Bill's bridle, and staring up at Honoré with a twisted and malevolent grin, said thickly: "Your father's waitin' for you in the house. I'll take Bill. You hurry."

Honoré slid to the ground. "What's the matter with Dad?"

"I guess you know," Staples jerked the horse into the stable, and Everett followed, vaguely troubled. The big fellow slapped Bill and sent him galloping headlong into his stall. Then Staples turned to Everett. His face was contorted; his underlip worked convulsively, and his little eyes, half shut, stared at the Easterner with such concentrated hate that Everett was startled.

"You damn' sneak! I'll kill you for this."

Everett understood immediately that Staples had followed Honoré and had spied on them at the Well. This, somehow, was a simple beginning to all the complicated wretchedness that was to follow. This, at least, was understandable. Hate—jealousy—the primitive and satisfying desire to kill! Well, let him have it!

They fought almost in silence, circling in the shadows of the stable. Staples had lost his temper and his self-control. He breathed heavily and plunged head-down, swinging his huge fists like an automaton. He struck again and again, where Everett struck only once. Behind them the horses stamped and whisked flies, oblivious to this absurd tragedy. A square of hot sunlight lay upon the floor, and the two men swayed in and out of it like figures in a pantomime.

"Gawd," Staples groaned, "you sneak! You cowardly sneak!"

Everett thought: "All right. You'll pay for that."

He drew back a little, watched his chance and hit the awkward hand straight on the point of his chin. Staples grunted and went down, slipping to his full length in that patch of blazing light. He lay there with his eyes shut and his mouth open, like a collapsed marionette.

Everett went across the yard to the house, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. It came away red.

Clara was in her room, standing by the window. She turned when he opened the door, her face very white and still.

"I know," she said. "Staples told me."

Everett sat down on the bed, trying to straighten out the torn sleeve of his shirt. He was very painstaking about this. All the while, his mind kept trying to face the unalterable facts of his life. They should have been clear enough, but they weren't. Nothing was clear but Clara's face.

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

Clara smiled. There was pity in her smile, not for herself but for him. "I'm going home—now." Then he saw for the first time that she was wearing her traveling dress. Her hat lay on the bureau, and the silver-topped bottles were gone—packed in the familiar suitcase marked, "C. E. New York."

How to Keep Your Hair Beautiful

**Without Beautiful Well Kept Hair
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STUDY the pictures of these beautiful women and you will see just how much their hair has to do with their appearance.

Beautiful hair is not a matter of luck, it is simply a matter of care. You, too, can have beautiful hair if you care for it properly. Beautiful hair depends almost entirely upon the care you give it.

Shampooing is always the most important thing.

It is the shampooing which brings out the real life and lustre, natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

When your hair is dry, dull and heavy, lifeless, stiff and gummy, and the strands cling together, and it feels harsh and disagreeable to the touch, it is because your hair has not been shampooed properly.

When your hair has been shampooed properly, and is thoroughly clean, it will be glossy, smooth and bright, delightfully fresh-looking, soft and silky.

While your hair must have frequent and regular washing to keep it beautiful, it cannot stand the harsh effect of ordinary soaps. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

That is why leading motion picture stars and discriminating women use Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo. This clear, pure and entirely greaseless product cannot possibly injure and it does not dry the scalp, or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

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Follow This Simple Method

FIRST, wet the hair and scalp in clear, warm water. Then apply a little Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo, rubbing it in thoroughly all over the scalp and throughout the entire length down to the ends of the hair.

Rub the Lather Thoroughly

TWO or three teaspoonfuls will make an abundance of rich, creamy lather. This should be rubbed in thoroughly and briskly with the finger tips, so as to loosen the dandruff and small particles of dust and dirt that stick to the scalp.

When you have done this, rinse the hair and scalp thoroughly, using clear, fresh, warm water. Then use another application of Mulsified.

You can easily tell when the hair is perfectly clean, for it will be soft and silky in the water.

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THIS is very important. After the final washing the hair and scalp should be rinsed in at least two changes of good warm water and followed with a rinsing in cold water.

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"Now?"

"In a few minutes. Wilkens is going to drive me as far as Camulos, and I'll catch the stage there. The express comes through Daylight at six this evening."

"You can't go alone."

"Yes, I can." She came over to him. "Take this handkerchief, Max. You're hurt. Was it Staples?"

He nodded, and holding the fine piece of cambric against his mouth, became conscious of the odor of rose and lilac. "I can't let you go to Daylight alone," he repeated.

"I've got to learn to do things alone," she answered. Suddenly her voice broke. "Oh, Max—why didn't I learn sooner? You've loved me so much—you've made me helpless. I feel like a child—in the dark." She put her hand on his shoulder. "Don't think that I'm blaming you—for this. You were ready for it. Do you,"—she hesitated,—“do you love Honoré?"

He answered wretchedly: "I don't know."

"I'll leave you to find out."

"No."

"Yes. I've talked to Wilkens. He understands. I'll be waiting to hear. If you want, you can come back to me. I won't promise that I'll be the same. I'm going to stand alone, if I can. It's the only safety a woman has."

Suddenly she took his head in her hands, and leaning against her, he heard the familiar beating of her heart. Then she walked quickly away, put on her hat without a glance in the mirror, took the suitcase and went out. Everett heard the rattle of wheels in the yard; and rising dizzily, he went to the window and watched Wilkens' team swing through the gate, pass the clump of dusty trees

and disappear into the shimmering glare of the plain. Clara had gone. He thought: "This is the dream I was after. God in heaven, why?"

HE thought of Honoré. Was she safe, with Staples in that ugly mood? The big fellow would be conscious again by now. Horrible! And he had wanted beauty, nothing but beauty!

He went downstairs. Honoré was on the porch, looking after the team. She shivered when she saw Everett.

"Honoré," he said, "tell me what to do."

"Follow her!" She made a grimace and spread out her hands. "Now that she's gone, what is our love worth? Follow her! Follow her now! The mountains aren't blue when you get to them. I know, for I've been there! They're slate-colored and treeless and silent and ugly. Follow her, before it's too late!"

"Do you want me to?"

"Yes."

Everett met her eyes. They were tearless and steady. She smiled and lifted her head. "Yes." Everett glanced away from her to the circling wall of sapphire blue.

"Staples—" he began.

"Staples doesn't matter. I'm not afraid of him."

"I don't believe you're afraid of anything."

"I'm not."

They clasped hands.

"God bless you!" Everett said. And turning on his heel, he went quickly toward the stable to saddle Tuerto. If he hurried, he knew, he could overtake Clara at Camulos. It was better that she should not go alone the rest of the way.

THE MAN WITH STEEL FINGERS

(Continued from page 36)

title and the whole properties of your family by the accident of birth. Your father, the second son, having no title and no fortune, entered the diplomatic service and was allotted to one of the little courts of southeastern Europe. He married your mother there, and you were born and grew up in the atmosphere of Serbia. There was little chance that you would ever have fortune or title. Lord Winton had two sons; one of them married an American; the other remained unmarried. There were three lives between you and this title and its immense estates in England. . . . What chance was there, monsieur, that these persons should be removed and these benefits descend to you?"

He paused.

"But they were removed, monsieur, and the benefits have descended. The war appeared. Both sons of Lord Winton lost their lives in it; Lord Winton is himself murdered; and you come, monsieur, from a paupered kingdom of southeastern Europe to be a peer of England with an immense estate. Even the American granddaughter of Lord Winton takes nothing under this extraordinary English law of entail. Would you call this chance, monsieur?"

Lord Valleys found no difficulty at all with the inquiry. He replied directly.

"Monsieur," he said, "it was all clearly chance except the murder of Lord Winton. That was, of course, design—a design which the wise English authorities attributed to me, and which they spared no effort to fix upon me. That they were unable to do so is not, I think, attributable to this thing which you call Providence. It is attributable rather, I think, to the intelligence of my legal counsel and to myself."

He looked directly at Monsieur Jonquille. His big, placid face lifted; his voice was even and unhurried.

"I am not embarrassed to discuss it, monsieur," he continued. "When the war had ended with the death of Lord Winton's sons, I was, by virtue of what you have so aptly called 'the accident of birth,' next in succession to the title. I thought it both advisable and courteous to present myself to Lord Winton, and I went to England for that purpose."

"Lord Winton was an eccentric person. As he grew older, and after the death of his sons, his eccentricity became more dominant. I did not find him on his estates at Ravenscroft; he was at this

How to have the lovely nails that are today expected of everyone

Well-groomed hands are today a social and business necessity



Photograph by Baron de Meyer

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These three simple operations keep your nails always lovely



First, the Cuticle Remover. Dip the orange stick wrapped in cotton into the bottle of Cutex, work around the nail base, and then wash the hands. The ugly dead cuticle will simply wipe off.



Then the Nail White. This is to remove stains and to give the nail tips an immaculate whiteness. Squeeze the paste under the nails directly from the tube.



Finally the Polish. A delightful, jewel-like shine is obtained by spreading the Powder or Cake on the palm of the hand and rubbing the palm swiftly across the nails of the opposite hand.

FIVE years ago manicuring was a social nicety. But today well-groomed hands are a social and business necessity. Unkept nails cannot pass muster either in society or in business any more than neglected teeth or untidy hair—and they are criticized just as severely.

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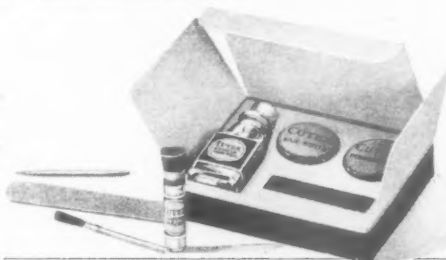
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time in London in a little old house which the family has always owned in a street toward Covent Garden.

"On the night that I called to see Lord Winton, it was quite late. I found him alone in the house. He seemed disturbed to see me, but he was courteous, and I cannot complain of his welcome. He seemed, however, not to realize that I had grown into a man. He seemed to regard me as a queer, foreign lad to whom he owed some obligation of hospitality."

LORD VALLEYS stopped. He leaned a little forward in the chair, and his voice took on a firmer note.

"Monsieur," he said, "I am saying to you now a thing to which I testified at the English trial, and which was not believed. Lord Winton told me that he expected a person to call on him within a very few minutes and to remain for perhaps an hour. He asked me to return at the end of an hour. I got up to go. As I went down the stairway, a hansom, entering the street from the direction of the City, stopped before the door. The door was closed, but the sound was clearly audible.

"Lord Winton, who was behind me, came also down the steps. On a console in the hall were several candles which the servants, according to custom, had placed there. An idea came to Lord Winton, for he stopped me as my hand was on the door to go out. He took up one of these candles in a tall brass candlestick, and touching me on the arm, handed it to me."

"Instead of going out," he said, "suppose you go down into the wine-cellar. There should be some bottles of Burgundy of a famous year stored there by your grandfather. See if you can find them, and we shall have a glass of wine with our talk. I have a great deal to say to you, my nephew. The wine will sustain us."

"You will see, monsieur, that this idea that I was merely a grown-up lad, come to visit an ancient relative, was quite fixed with Lord Winton. As the servants had gone out, he was sending me, as though I were a lad from Eton, to find the wine for our conversation. He gave me the key, a direction about the steps and doors. He even said there was a box of biscuit on the dining-room table which I should bring up. It was all, you see, monsieur, quite as though I were an undergraduate from some English public school."

"The Settling Of the Sage"

A fascinating novel of the West

By **HAL G. EVARTS**

will begin in the next,
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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

THE man looked down at his firm, placid hands resting upon and obscuring the arms of the chair in which he sat.

"This, monsieur," he said, "is a portion of my evidence which the English criminal court refused to believe. It was incredibly stupid."

Monsieur Jonquelle looked up sharply at that sentence.

"The English criminal court," he said, "was even more stupid than you imagine. It was, as you have said, 'incredibly stupid.'"

Lord Valleys made no comment.

"There was only my word for the statement," he said. "I could not prove it, and yet it was the truth."

The man was startled by Monsieur Jonquelle's reply.

"One knew that, although one would have been troubled to describe the evidence. It is precisely the truth," said Monsieur Jonquelle.

Lord Valleys looked steadily at the Prefect for a moment before he spoke.

"I regret, monsieur," he said, "that you were not present in that English court."

The man looked down again at his wonderful hands, steel strong, and as supple as silk; then he went on:

"It happened, however, that this chance, which you question in human affairs, came to my aid. One of the Metropolitan police on duty on this night in the neighborhood of Covent Garden saw a hansom drive away from Lord Winton's door. The time, as nearly as could be fixed, corresponded with the hour which I had indicated in my testimony. And for the first time in the course of the criminal trial, the case for the Crown was shaken. Neither my solicitors nor the Crown were able to discover anything further. The driver of the hansom could not be located, and the one who called that night upon Lord Winton remained a mystery."

Lord Valleys continued to speak deliberately and without emotion.

"I do not know who this person, with whom Lord Winton had a midnight appointment, could have been, and I do not know what occurred at that mysterious conference, except, of course, the resultant tragedy, which was afterwards known to everyone.

"I took the candle which Lord Winton gave me and went along the hall to the stairway, which descended into the basement of the house. I had in my hand the key to the wine-cellar.

"The last I saw of Lord Winton in his life was his tall, bowed back as he stooped to open the door, his hand on the latch. He seemed a sort of heavy shadow outlined against the door in the dim light of the gas-jet that burned feebly, lighting the hall behind him."

He made a vague gesture, lifting one of his hands softly from the arm of the chair.

"Here, monsieur, chance or my intelligence failed me. If I had remained a moment—if, in fact, I had looked back as I went down the stairway at the end of the hall, I should have seen Lord Winton's assassin."

The Prefect of Police made no comment, and Lord Valleys continued:

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"After some little difficulty, I finally found the door to the wine-cellar, opened it and entered. It was very old—one of those huge stone cells which the early English built in their houses in which to store the choice wines of France."

"It seemed to me that this wine-cellar had not been entered for a long time. I was mistaken in this impression. Fortunately for me, it had, from time to time, been looked into by Lord Winton's manservant. I have said 'fortunately,' because this manservant, Staley, was able to confirm my statement."

"The whole of the low vault was cluttered with straw, piled and heaped with it, like a farmer's rick. It was this aspect of the place that gave me the impression that it had not been entered for a long time. And it was true that it had not been disturbed for a long time. The walls and the floor of this cellar were stone; the ceiling was of wood crossed with beams dried out like tinder, and the bins, as I have said, were heaped with the straw in which innumerable wine-cases had been packed."

"Lord Winton had described the wine which he wished so that I could not mistake it. But he was not certain in which bin it was to be found, and I had to make a search of very nearly the whole of the cellar. This did not disturb me, for Lord Winton had fixed an hour as the length of the visit of the person whom he expected, and who, in fact, had arrived. And I was not to return until that time. It was, as nearly as I can determine, about eleven o'clock of the night when I went down the steps to the wine-cellar."

THE man remained silent a moment as if in some contemplation. Finally he continued:

"An unfortunate accident occurred. In rising from a bin over which I had been stooped, the candle touched a wisp of straw hanging from above, and immediately the dried-out, half-rotten wood of the beamed ceiling flashed into flame."

He paused again.

"I was appalled, but I did not lose my sense of necessity. I undertook to put the fire out. I made a desperate effort against it, there in that underground cell, for I knew the house must burn if this whole wood ceiling took fire. The place filled with smoke. It became very nearly impossible to breathe, but I did not give up the fight against the fire. Finally when I was blinded, choked and very nearly unconscious, I broke open the door leading from the basement of the

house and ran out into the street. It seemed that I should never breathe, and I continued to run."

"You know what followed. I was taken up by one of the Metropolitan police; the burning house was entered, and Lord Winton brought out. He was dead! The small blade of a knife had been driven into his body low down on the right side. The wound, ranging upward, was deep. It had severed a vital artery."

Lord Valleys got up. He did it softly and apparently without any effort, as one merely changes his position in a chair. He had been seated, and instantly he was standing. He had the aspect of one intending to accomplish some act in the room, but pausing to complete his story before he went forward.

"It was to be expected, monsieur, that the English court under these circumstances would try me for the murder of Lord Winton. I had both the motive and the opportunity to accomplish it, and the circumstances were, to say the least, indicative. And I should have been convicted of that murder but for two directions in which chance helped me, and a third in which the intelligence of my legal counsel was able to establish my innocence beyond any question."

"To my surprise, this manservant, Staley, came forward to establish the fact that the wine-cellar was little less than a straw-rick, and this Metropolitan police officer appeared to say that he had seen the hansom leaving Lord Winton's door shortly before the fire was discovered. These facts indicated the truth of my statement."

"A further fact brought out by my legal advisers established with mathematical accuracy the fact that I had not dealt Lord Winton the blow that ejected him out of life. The wound which had caused his death had been made with the small blade of a knife. The police found in my pocket a knife with a small blade, a blade of about the width of the wound. No evidence of blood was found on this knife but the police professed to believe that it had been carefully washed. They thought traces of moisture remained on it. The case seemed convincing. I myself realized its gravity, and but for one fact a conviction might have followed. The autopsy showed that the wound which had caused the death of Lord Winton was seven inches deep. The handle of the knife with which it had been accomplished had not entered the wound. The wound was no larger than the width of the small knife-blade at its exterior point."

Lord Valleys suddenly extended his hand, like one who puts down something that is finished.

"It therefore followed, monsieur, with mathematical accuracy that no verbal conjecture could ever obscure, that the knife-blade with which this wound had been accomplished was at least seven inches in length. The knife-blade found on my person by the Metropolitan police was only four inches in length. It was, therefore, certain, as certain as only a mathematical calculation can be certain, that Lord Winton was not killed with the knife which I carried."

"And I was therefore acquitted. . . .

You know, monsieur, what the English law-courts say: 'A man may lie, but circumstances cannot.' I may have lied, and Lord Winton's manservant and the Metropolitan police who saw the hansom drive away on that night; but the science of mathematics could not lie. A wound seven inches deep could not be made with a knife-blade four inches long. And the case ended."

HE went over to a table, got a tortoise-shell box delicately inlaid with silver, opened it and presented it to Monsieur Jonquelle.

"You will have a cigarette, monsieur?" he said.

It is also possible that he wished to see what it was that Monsieur Jonquelle observed on the opposite side of the street. For some time he had occasionally looked that way. Nothing was to be observed there—women, children passed. Two young men, elegantly dressed, coming up on either side, had stopped and were engaged in some animated discourse.

Monsieur Jonquelle took the cigarette, and Lord Valleys went back to the chair.

"Monsieur," said the Prefect of Police, "do you have any idea who this mysterious assassin of Lord Winton was?"

"I do not," replied Lord Valleys. "There was much conjecture at the trial, but it was all wholly conjecture. It must, however, have been some powerful person, because the assassin must have held Lord Winton with one hand and driven in the knife with the other. The experts pretended to find evidence of bruised places, as from a powerful hand."

Then suddenly, as out of some inciting memory, the man's voice changed.

"A moment ago, monsieur, when I mentioned the arrival of the visitor at Lord Winton's house, and the doubt of the English court of that fact, you said it was true. How do you know that it was true, if I may be permitted to inquire?"

The Prefect of Police balanced the cigarette a moment in his fingers before he replied.

"I know your statement about the hansom is true, monsieur, because I know who it was that came to Lord Winton on that night. And, monsieur, it is on behalf of this person that I have come to you today."

Lord Valleys was astonished, but he did not move, and his expression did not change.

"You amaze me," he said. "Upon what mission from this mysterious person could you come to me?"

"Upon the same mission," replied the Prefect of Police, "with which that person went on the fatal night to Lord Winton's house in Covent Garden. Lord Winton promised to do a certain thing for this, as you call it, 'mysterious person.' He died before it could be carried out, and I have now come to you to fulfill it. I trust, monsieur, that you will not deny me."

Lord Valleys' astonishment was now profound, but he continued to give no evidence of it. His voice remained low and conventional.

"Monsieur," he said, "this suggestion seems preposterous. Why should I carry

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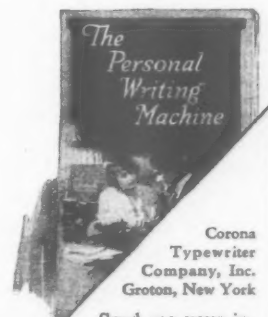
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out something which Lord Winton promised, and why should you come to me from his assassin?"

"I do not come to you from his assassin," replied Monsieur Jonquelle, "but I do come to you to carry out what he promised. As you have taken the properties and the title of Lord Winton, you should assume, also, his obligations."

Monsieur Jonquelle rose. He took a folded, legal paper out of his pockets and presented it to Lord Valleys.

"Monsieur," he said, "Lord Winton promised to execute this indenture. He died before his signature could be attached to it. I must ask you to execute it in his stead."

SUDDENLY, as once before on this morning, Lord Valleys, who had been seated the instant before, was now, with no motion that seemed visible to the eye, standing on his feet. He came forward, took the paper which Monsieur Jonquelle held in his hand, and going over to the table, unfolded it and stooped over it. He was some time in an inspection of the document, and in the meantime Monsieur Jonquelle had made a gesture, as one of flicking the ashes from a cigarette through the open window into the Bois de Boulogne. The two young men in their animated discussion instantly crossed the street and entered the house.

Presently Lord Valleys rose from his stooped posture. He was shaken with astonishment, but there was of this astonishment no visible element, either in his appearance or in his voice.

"Monsieur," he said, "this is a deed drawn by an English solicitor, conveying all of Lord Winton's estates in England to his granddaughter, Barbara Westridge. Why, monsieur, should I convey these estates to this American girl? They have descended to me by inheritance. One does not alienate his lands without a cause."

"I will suggest a reason," replied Monsieur Jonquelle. "This is in accordance with Lord Winton's promise. You stand now in Lord Winton's stead, and as I have said, you have received his benefits, and you should assume his obligations."

Lord Valleys looked at the Prefect of Police.

"You do not suggest a legal obligation, I imagine."

"I do not," replied Monsieur Jonquelle. "But I suggest that the moral reason is compelling, and you will not deny me!"

Lord Valleys smiled—that vague smile which seemed not to disturb the features of his face. He folded the deed together in his hand.

"You must permit me to decline, monsieur," he said.

He paused a moment, and the background of his face hardened.

"And you must overlook it, monsieur," he said, "if I feel that your whole suggestion with respect to this matter is not convincing. This girl could not have assassinated Lord Winton."

"She could not," replied Monsieur Jonquelle. "Lord Winton was killed by some powerful assassin who seized him, compressed his body and drove in the knife."

He turned now toward Lord Valleys, his face firm.

"Monsieur," he said, "will you carry out the obligation of Lord Winton and leave the matter of his assassin a mystery, or will you refuse it and have that mystery solved?"

The man at the table looked strangely at Monsieur Jonquelle. He had the aspect of a creature of great strength, concerned always with concealing it. He was puzzled and disturbed, but his voice did not change.

"You know, then, the assassin of Lord Winton?"

"I do," replied the Prefect. "Shall I name him to you?"

The man made again the vague gesture with his white, steel fingers.

"You may keep the secret of the name, monsieur," he said, "if you will be kind enough to tell me the thing that indicated to you the name."

"With pleasure," replied Monsieur Jonquelle. "You have said that the English criminal courts are stupid, and I have concurred in that opinion. Observe, monsieur, the evidence of that stupidity. This criminal court could not understand how a knife-blade four inches long could inflict a direct wound seven inches deep. They measured the knife-blade and the wound, these English, and wrote it down impossible. . . . But you, monsieur, who are Slav, and I who am Latin, would hardly arrive at this conclusion. For we would reflect that a knife-blade four inches long, driven into the soft tissues of the body compressed together by the impact of a powerful blow might easily leave a wound measuring seven inches in length behind it,—when that compression was released and the tissues relaxed. It is a fact, monsieur, that the Service de Sûreté has frequently demonstrated."

THE man at the table was motionless, as in some indecision. He did not change. He remained only in a sort of dreadful immobility, and he seemed in this immobility to consider some desperate hazard. He was awakened by the two young men from the Bois de Boulogne, who now entered the drawing-room.

"Monsieur," said the voice of the Prefect of Police, "I feared that I might not be your equal in all directions, and I have asked these two agents of the Service to come up. They will also be useful as witnesses to the indenture."

Lord Valleys made no reply. He opened a drawer of the table, took out a pen and attached his signature to the deed—waited until the witnesses had signed it, blotted it carefully and folding it together, handed it to the Prefect of Police.

"I purchase immunity," he said, "from a second trial before the English criminal court!"

Monsieur Jonquelle received the indenture and put it into his pocket. He took up his gloves, his hat, his stick; then he smiled.

"You purchased, monsieur," he said, "a thing that you already possess. It is the law of England that one who has been acquitted of a crime cannot again be tried in her courts for it!"

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CALLED ON ACCOUNT OF DARKNESS

(Continued from page 60)

"H'm!" commented the physician. "Ever suffer a blow on the head?"

"I was beamed by Jake Jordan of the Reds and was out on my feet for two days," confessed the Quince. "They don't make 'em any speedier than that bird." He felt meditatively above his right ear. "I bat right-handed, but I ducked into this one," he explained.

"So!" commented the physician. "You were beamed over the right temple, and then the sight of the right eye failed; you wouldn't notice it at first, but you wouldn't be able to gauge distance. Then the left eye began to be affected. Try gripping my hand."

The Quince extended his fingers. "Harder," instructed Hilmer. "Grip my hand as hard as you can."

"I guess I'm all in," acknowledged the Quince. "Brick McGovern was right in giving me the air."

"Then you're fired?"
"Of course. Don't you read the papers? I've been stringing the Kid along the best I could, and I don't want to be here when he finds it out. He aint exactly like most kids, Doc."

"No," Hilmer agreed, "he's not like most, but he is very like one that I mentioned; that one had a hero, too."

SOME one knocked lightly and Hilmer opened the door. It was Mary.

"Excuse me," she pleaded, "but Doctor—do you think it would be all right to give Billy a soft-boiled egg?"

He nodded gravely and then motioned her to a chair.

"Sit down a moment, Miss Malone," he requested. "I have something to say to both of you. Terry and I have been exchanging confidences. I am addicted to morphine; and he is almost totally blind."

"Oh!" gasped Mary Malone. "Oh!"
"It is possible," Hilmer continued, "that there is hope for both of us. A very delicate operation might relieve the pressure, which I suspect exists on Terry's brain. As for myself—it will be very hard, but there is a little boy upstairs—"

Mary Malone rose to her feet. She laid a light hand on the Quince's bowed head, and then went very straight to Hilmer.

"The darkest hour!" she said softly. "It's true, isn't it, Doctor? The light is going to come again. . . . You'll win—both of you!" She achieved a smile.

"Good-by to the Triple Alliance!" she cried. "We'll have to call it the Fighting Four!"

"One more point," said Hilmer. "I am going away for a little while. In the meantime I shall ask that both of you go to the Affiliated Colleges and learn more about me; also it would be well to get their diagnosis of the case. When I return, if I do not feel equal to the task, I shall say so frankly and recommend some one else. As for my practice,"—he smiled slightly,—"I will ask a very dear friend to keep an eye on Billy Winks."

HILMER won, for he came from a long line of ancestry which on land and sea had met the challenge of the enemy with the stubborn motto: "*J'y suis; j'y reste!*"

So it came to pass that one day in the little brick hospital on the hill overlooking the St. Clair ball-grounds and the city as well, they wheeled the Ten-thousand-dollar Quince away to the operating-room. Mary Malone waited until the purr of the rubber wheels became lost far down the corridor, before she fainted.

And Dr. Basil Horace Hilmer, who had elected to forget many things, including the three foreign decorations in his trunk at home, donned once more his surgeon's mask and apron, and trephined the Quince's skull, cutting through the brain-covering itself to remove the cyst which pressed downward. It was a very delicate operation, so delicate that there was a moment when the only one who breathed was the man lying on the table.

But when it was all over and Terry Baldwin was back once more in his own room with his senses clearing, Mary Malone on one side of his bed, a nurse on the other—then the suspense was very great indeed.

Gradually the stupor faded from Baldwin's eyes, and he looked first at the nurse and then at the girl. Very deliberately he closed his right eye and regarded them with the left, reversing this procedure solemnly several times. Next he directed both eyes at the ceiling, then straight ahead, then to either side.

Mary Malone saw a finger crooked in her direction. She leaned over the bed.

"Closer," implored the Quince, "just a little closer."

The nurse moved to the window. Mary Malone bent close until her lips brushed those upturned toward hers.

"Mary, will you?"

"Yes, Terry."

The Quince exhaled profoundly. Then: "Mary, I can pretty near see through that wall. Just you watch me hit that old apple; just you watch me run them bags; just you watch us go back to the majors with a brass band. Bend down just once more—please!"

The door opened to admit Hilmer, still with his sleeves rolled up.

"Well, well," he laughed, "that's certainly a powerful restorative. Go right ahead; I've sent the car for Billy."

When the junior member of the Fighting Four showed up, he had on a new suit, and his hair was neatly licked into place. He came in holding Dr. Hilmer's hand, and there was something in the tacit understanding apparent between the two that appealed vastly to the others.

"Billy and I have been talking it over, you see," the physician explained, "and we've about agreed to cast our lot together. I'm wishing another name on him, and he's going to teach me how to play ball again; isn't that it, Son?"

"Yes sir," said Billy Winks Hilmer. "And wouldn't it be great if you made the majors too?"

A CHILD OF THE FAMINE

(Continued from page 55)

"Know always that thou and thy one chosen man shall be equally sacred to me."

With the Moon-flower safely isolated for the night, the Fire-flame turned joyously to her task. Messengers traveled swiftly and many times between Bartlett Alley and the *tong*-house of the Four Brothers. Lee Yuen, their master, made cautious by age, race and training, hesitated to trust himself upon the streets, though tempted sorely by the luring bait offered by the Fire-flame. Desire at last overcame even caution. He sent word that within the first hour of the new day he would go unattended to the house of the Fire-flame.

BEFORE the first stroke of midnight the trap was set and waiting. Behind the portières that screened the girl's couch a Hop Sing gunman was securely hidden. Close in front of the hanging screen, so that Lee Yuen's back might be within easy reach of the dagger that awaited it, his death-chair was placed. The secret exit through which the executioner was to escape, unseen and unsuspected, was unlatched. No least detail had been neglected. Once he had entered the room, the master of the Four Brothers was doomed beyond hope of escape.

Smilingly, happily, without the slightest twinge of conscience or regret, the Fire-flame awaited him.

There was a step upon the stairway—a step that ascended slowly with wary caution. Listening, the Fire-flame felt the satisfying thrill of imminent and great accomplishment. There was a tap upon the door, and she threw it open with a smile upon her lips and the scent of lotus-flowers in her hair. On the threshold was a man, but not Lee Yuen.

"Who art thou?" she cried, aghast at the unexpected and bitterly unwelcome interruption.

"The first-born son of Lee Yuen. I come to thee to speak with his voice," he answered.

"A-h-h! All is yet well," the girl whispered, so softly that none but herself might hear. Then she seated the best-beloved son of the aged *tong*-master whose cunning had defeated her, in the waiting chair of death. He would be a doubly welcome sacrifice, both to herself and Eye You, for Lee Yuen would have chosen a hundred deaths for himself rather than that his son might perish.

"Speak," urged the visitor, inwardly praising the woman's beauty as he leaned back against the portières.

"For gold, before the rising of the sun, I can deliver unto you the life of Eye You, thy *tong*'s mortal enemy," the Fire-flame began. Behind her victim the embroidered drapery stirred as the Hop Sing assassin poised his arm for the leath-blow. "For gold—"

Beyond the Fire-flame's couch, a door opened, and in it stood the Moon-flower. As she saw the youth whom her sister faced so smilingly, her eyes widened,

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and her hands clutched at her breast in a sudden passion of yearning.

"In sleep I dreamed thou wert near me, O beloved lord of my heart," she cried to Lee Yuen's son. "Waking, I find thee here. Ah, beloved one—"

The portières swayed and bulged outward. The dagger-blade showed through them. . . . With a scream the Fire-flame flung herself open-armed before it, and upon her breast fell the steel blade meant for the first-born of Lee Yuen.

THERE was a hurried shuffling of slipped feet as the Hop Sing killer, believing his work done, fled swiftly and invisibly through the exit that had been made ready. The Fire-flame swayed upon crumpling limbs as she turned for one last, brief second to the two who, without understanding, stared into her glazing eyes.

"For thee, my beloved sister," she murmured faintly, "for thee, as I promised, I have saved him—even from myself."

Slowly she sank to the floor, and when the moaning Moon-flower knelt beside her, the Fire-flame's eyes were closed beyond reopening.

In the arms of Lee Yuen's son, Moon-flower, his betrothed, was carried that night to the sanctuary of the Four Brothers' *tong*-house, where, even in the intensity of her grief, her heart felt the solacing comfort of the love it had craved so long.

But the Fire-flame, unsolaced, lay alone where she had fallen.

ROSY CANT FALL IN LOVE (Continued from page 65)

"Oh, was that your idea? It's a pity you didn't try it on a different client. Most of the boat was engaged in that amusement by the time we passed the Azores. But not I."

"Weren't you tempted?"

"Well, they tried to tempt me—the captain, the first officer, the second, third and fourth, the purser, all the engineers except one Scotchman, and all the planters. I liked the ship card-sharper best. He offered to teach me how to make a living at poker."

"And didn't the accomplishments of this knave of clubs convert themselves into those of the knave of hearts?"

"No. I think he really loved me, Mr. Smith. You see, he said he'd commit suicide if I didn't marry him. And he did throw himself overboard, just before we reached Rio. But some people had found out how it was he held such good cards. So it may not have been me, after all. Anyhow, it doesn't matter; I don't care how many men go overboard for me; what I want is to go overboard for a man. I'd better give it up. I'll go into a convent."

"Oh, don't do that," cried Mr. Smith in an agonized tone. "Give me one more chance. I've thought it out in advance." Whereupon he developed his plan.

"Well," said Miss de la Bole, when he had done, "I will say this for your plan: it doesn't seem much more likely to come off than the others, but it sounds better fun. I'll do it."

WHEN she came back, many weeks having elapsed, she seemed so content that once more Mr. Smith anticipated success. But again he was to be disappointed: "Did you enjoy yourself?" he asked.

"Oh, yes! Italy was lovely. I went to Venice, and was rowed about in gondolas, and for a coach-trip through the Abruzzi. And we went motoring from Florence to Rome. And I saw hundreds of churches, and thousands of pictures—"

"And how many men?"

"Lots."

"You brought one home?"

She sighed. "No, not one—not even a little one."

"Weren't you a success, with all my introductions to the best families?"

"Oh, they were very nice. I think I did rather well, really. If I liked I could have been a double duchess, a quadruple marchioness, while as for counts—count

them as nothing." A tiny blush rose in her cheeks: "And there was an American college boy too. He was quite nice."

"And did no member of the Italian peerage—"

"No. Their hair's too black. Their manners are too good, and can't be true. Besides, they seemed to love me in such a tempestuous way that they didn't give me a chance to develop at all."

"You mean that a little coldness would have helped you? I presume you didn't get that from the American either?"

"No. He really was rather sweet, but so chivalrous. He put me on a pedestal, and I felt lonely." She sighed: "Yet, somehow, I didn't want to get off. I felt a mother to him. Mr. Smith, you've failed again and I'll have no more of it. I resign."

"But I don't," said Mr. Smith, rising. "You must fall in love. It's becoming a point of honor with me. If I have to wear you to a shadow, if I have to make you wish yourself dead, you shall fall in love."

He talked on most convincingly, and finally persuaded her to acquiesce to his new plan. He was to give special attention to her case, and making his first exception to his rule against matrimonial agency, to put her into touch with some selected clients who needed wives.

But it was not a success. The first attempt was made with a fashionable doctor, who wanted a wife to run society for him. He had wit, wealth—"everything," stormed Mr. Smith, "to make a woman happy."

But Miss de la Bole sighed and said that he was everything lovable, but that all the same she couldn't love him. Then Mr. Smith produced a dancing partner, who got on so well with Rosy that he suggested to her that they should dance through life. Rosy danced with the young man a great deal, and wrecked his chances of a very good match; Mr. Smith was full of anxiety and hope, when, suddenly, the girl declared that she was sick of dancing and wanted to settle down. Mr. Smith attempted to meet this demand with an elderly viscount who wanted looking after. For one moment Rosy was tempted, and said to Mr. Smith: "The poor dear! He's always mislaying his teeth. Somebody ought to find them for him." But finally she decided that it must be somebody else.

Mr. Smith and Rosy, then, without confession, began to accept the idea that

the case was hopeless. Mr. Smith struggled against the evidence. In a mechanical way he still took Rosy to theaters, where actors beloved by a hundred thousand women might perhaps draw from her a moment of emotion—but in vain; to boxing matches, where athletes might prove seductive—but in vain; to the races, where dashing sportsmen could be viewed—in vain! At last there came a moment, during a walk in the country, when Mr. Smith, rather careworn and oppressed, said to her: "I'm afraid I must give it up."

THEY stopped by a stile, Mr. Smith stricken with misery. "You don't know," he said, "what this failure means to me. I am an old bachelor; I'm forty-two; and nobody in the world has any use for me except through these difficulties which I solve."

"I have," said Rosy, very gently.

"Oh, I know. You're my client like the others. I might have been useful to you. And I'm sorry I've failed."

Rosy turned away from him a little, and in a very soft voice, murmured: "Oh, I don't know."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Smith inquiringly.

A blushing cheek was turned towards him. "Well," she said, "you've been trying to make me fall in love, haven't you? And perhaps—well, it's not for me to say it."

For a moment Mr. Smith's experience and his knowledge of women proved unavailing to make him understand. The revelation came suddenly, so suddenly that though he realized that from the first moment he had loved this wayward girl, that all through, it had been agony to try to marry her to somebody else, he felt unworthy: "Rosy," he whispered, taking her hand, "don't tempt me. I'm old, I'm—bald."

The girl smiled with an air of pity at the eminent psychologist, as if saying: "How little you know, after all!" Then, aloud: "Oh, that doesn't matter. You see, you're not like other men. You're soft-hearted, and you understand everything. At least, you seem to understand—me. Unless, perhaps, you don't—yet."

Then Mr. Smith showed that he understood, and when after a while she released herself from his arms, she said in a voice in which triumph was confounded with surrender: "You haven't failed."

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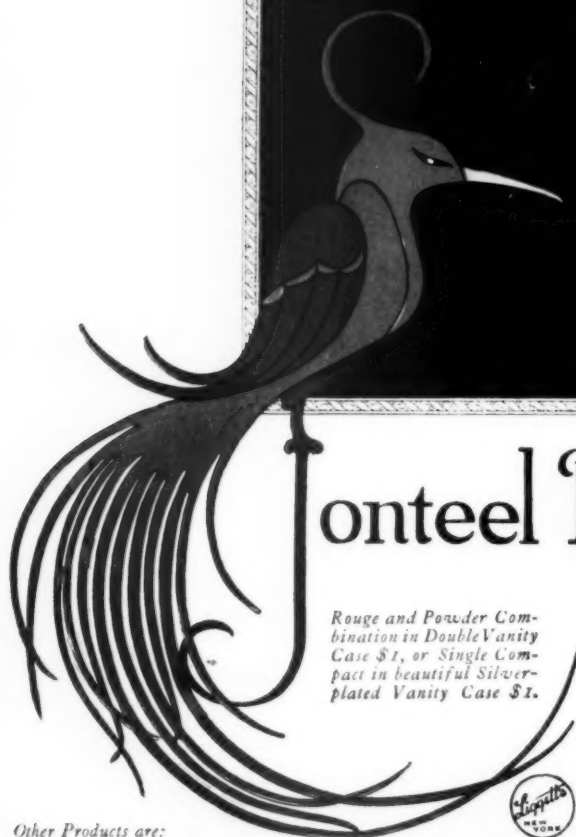
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HEREDITY?

(Continued from
page 51)

What law of attraction drew Nowlan to Dixie is one of the mysteries that keep life boiling. Whatever its base, he was following it to the end of its run. Debonair, delightful, dangerous, he gave to Dixie Lord the tribute of attention that a hundred women who watched him would have sold their jewels to win. The girl glowed beneath his devotion.

"I thought there would be but one idea in my head this afternoon," he told her. "I was sure that all I wanted in the world was to have Belplaine win. Now I'm not so sure that's all I want."

"Are you betting on Belplaine?" she asked, veering away from the deeper danger.

"I'm doing more than that," he smiled. "I own him."

Through her brain fluttered the recollection of Umbrella's comment on the Belcourt horses. What was wrong about them? Why did Umbrella always bet against them? Was it something in their history—or in the history of the Nowlans? She watched Bruce with vague disquiet that melted beneath his smile. "Aren't you going to let me come and see you," he asked her, "after Belplaine wins?"

Had Belplaine won, she would not have dared tell him that he might. Knowledge of Umbrella's rages after defeats at the Downs was too inbred in her to let her risk his meeting with the owner of a winner who had defeated the favorite. But Star Bright came down the track first amid the fluttering of handkerchiefs, thrusting his neck under the wire and bringing down an avalanche of riotous cheers. Umbrella Briggs, waving his huge sunshade, led the Rebel yell. He was still shouting when Bruce Nowlan came back to the box. Dixie slipped her hand into his. "I'm glad for Uncle," she said, "but I'm sorry for you."

"That more than evens the score," he told her. "May I come to see you tomorrow?"

"Yes," she nodded.

The woman in the next box leaned over. "I wonder—" she began, but the Deacon stepped in front of her. "I'll take Dixie home," he told Umbrella, "while you cash in your tickets."

THAT night, while St. John's Place rang with festive celebrations, Umbrella and Dixie sought to paint for Anna Marie the magic of the afternoon. Even Anna Marie unbent beneath Dixie's joy of life. She smiled when the two men drank to Star Bright; but she stared at Dixie with startled eyes when the girl said: "I wish you'd drink to Belplaine too. He ran bravely—and Mr. Nowlan was so game about losing."

"How did you know?" Anna Marie asked with dry lips.

"Why, he came back to ask me if he might come to see me."

"Not—not George Nowlan?"

"No, Bruce Nowlan."

"He's George's son," said Umbrella.

Anna Marie stood up, her hands shaking as she leaned them on the back of

her chair. She stared at Umbrella with cold fury. "And you said you'd take care of her!" she cried. She turned to Dixie. "Go upstairs, child," she bade her.

When the girl had gone, wonderingly, Anna Marie spoke to the two men. "Didn't you know that Bruce Nowlan is bad? That all the Nowlan men are? That he's the last man in the world for a child like her to know?"

"I should have known," Umbrella said. "He bought the Belcourt from Stepney."

"And Stepney was the man," said the Deacon, "who took Mabel Lord away."

"We must tell her she must not see him."

"What good will it do—now?"

"Mabel Lord was there," said the Deacon. "She saw Dixie."

"We must tell her everything, Cassius Clay."

"I'll be damned if I will," said Umbrella. "And you're not to do it, either. Her one chance in life is not to know what she may be."

"But this Nowlan—" Anna Marie persisted.

"We'll take care of him," he promised.

THE care the two old men took might have served its intended purpose in another day. Its only result was to keep Bruce Nowlan away from the house in St. John's Place but steeled in determination to see Dixie Lord; and when determination has youth, Maytime and a girl's dreams for allies, it wins the game. Besides, he held the key to the world she had glimpsed, a world of brilliant color and gay event, of chance and thrills and travel. Not once, but every day, he saw the girl whose foster-father had forbidden him to call. *Montagu* and *Capulet* played in a new Verona.

Through warm nights, tinged with the odor of jasmine blooms, Dixie Lord dreamed of love; and through golden afternoons, safe from prying eyes while she went on mythical social errands, she lived love. In love of life and love of love she thought she loved Bruce Nowlan. No matter how much she longed to go with him as he besought her,—and she sometimes wondered whether it was the man or the going that lured her,—she nevertheless held off decision. She would not even meet him again, she finally assured Bruce, without telling Uncle Cassius and Aunt Anna Marie.

"They won't let you come at all," Bruce told her as they sped out into the hills beyond the city.

"They can't keep me."

"Yes, they can." He fell into gloom. "Come with me now, Dixie. Marry me, and we'll go and tell them then!"

"No," she said, "it wouldn't be right. They have taken care of me since I was a baby, Bruce dear. I must tell them. I don't know why they don't want me to know you."

"Oh, there's reason enough," he said bitterly.

She went home in troubled terror,

pondering on his words. Some instinct had warned her, even in her first meeting with him, that no good would come from love of Bruce Nowlan. With all her innocence, she knew that life with him would not be in the ways of Umbrella and his wife. Uncle Cassius was queer, perhaps, and Anna Marie old-fashioned; but life with them was something high and fine, after all. Life with Bruce wouldn't be fine. It would be excitement, to be sure, and gaiety, and pleasure in deep draughts; but the cup was of pewter, and she who had drunk from gold knew the difference. She loved Bruce. And yet—

She came into the hall of the house, finding the door open. From the parlor came the sound of voices, Anna Marie's and another woman's. Dixie paused, wondering if she should go in. Then she heard a name that shook her in terror. "I tell you she meets Bruce Nowlan every day," the strange voice was saying. "I could have saved her that, at least!"

"I do not believe you," Anna Marie said.

The other woman laughed, and her laughter had a snarling sound. "Watch for yourself," she said. "Why should I come, if I couldn't prove it? It's true enough, God help her. And it's up to you to save her!"

She was moving toward the doorway, and Dixie went up the stairs to where she could see the stranger when she should come before the door. From the landing she watched her pass through the hall, a flashy, common, blondined woman with clanking jeweled chains and absurdly high French heels. She went out into the purpling sunset. From the room below came the sound of Aunt Anna Marie's sobbing. The girl went back down the stairs.

In the parlor she stood, facing the old woman with an armor of defiant courage. Anna Marie stared at her with eyes that seemed malevolent. "I heard that woman tell you," Dixie said, "that I meet Bruce Nowlan every day. You said you did not believe her. It is true. I meet him. He wants me to marry him."

"You can't!" Anna Marie cried. "You shall not. He's wicked, I tell you, like all the Nowlans. Don't you know who you are and what he is? Don't you

"The Isles of Peace"

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know what your mother is? Don't you know that she ran away, just before we took you, with another man, the man who owned the Belcourt then? Don't you know that your father killed himself? And that—"

"No," said Dixie, "I didn't know any of those things." The world was slipping beneath her feet. She put out her hand to hold herself steady. A sudden thought pierced through the blackness that engulfed her brain. "Who was that woman?" she asked Anna Marie.

"She is your mother."

SOMEWHERE, back in her childhood, Dixie Lord had built a shrine and made a statue to the woman whom she believed dead, a white shrine and a white statue. The memory of it rose before her, flung athwart the picture of the woman who had stood at the doorway in the sunset. . . . Slowly she began to laugh; and laughing she went up the stairs to the room where Anna Marie had installed her on the night when Umbrella Briggs had brought her home.

For long hours she sat, too numbed at first for thought beyond the horror of the revelation. She had known, of course, that no close ties of kinship held her to the man and woman who had raised her, but she had built for herself a fiction of a family connection that they had never dispelled. In it she had set her father and mother, romantic creatures who had dwelt in beauty ere they had been cut off by untimely deaths. Now, faced by the fact that her father had killed himself because her mother had run away from them, and that the woman she had seen was the mother she had long mourned in decorous propriety, the girl crouched down in the ruins of her dreams.

In the wreckage she took stock of herself. She was Dixie Lord, child of a dishonored father and a dishonorable mother. What did life have for her? Nothing but disaster, she told herself bitterly. All the theories of Cassius Clay Briggs rushed into the room to overthrow her. Blood, good blood, always triumphed. They all said so. The Star Brights always won, no matter how bravely the Belplains might strive for the goal. And if you hadn't it in you, what was the use of trying? What could she do with her life?

She couldn't stay, of course. If she stayed, she would one day bring worse disgrace upon them. They had always feared it. How could they help but fear it? It was written that some day she would be like that woman who had come to taunt Anna Marie, hard-faced, bitter, coarse, cheap, common. No matter what she did, she would be that. Then why not go with the tide?

Where could she go? She had no friends outside the Briggs' connections, no outlook that could make her daring. Girls in St. John's Place went out in marriage only. She would have to marry—and Bruce Nowlan was the only man who wanted to marry her. What had Aunt Anna Marie said of him? That he was evil, that he would drag her down? But what else could Dixie do? The daughter of Mabel Lord couldn't marry the son of a fine man. Wasn't this what

Uncle Cassius called "retributive justice?" Always she came back to the circling thought—what else could she do?

Numbly she went about the room, choosing those possessions she would require and flinging them into a bag. She would telephone Bruce to come for her, she decided. With the relief of action, she opened the door. There, seated on the top step of the stairway, waited Umbrella Briggs.

So beaten did he look, so battered by sorrow, that her heart sank even deeper. How had she failed to think of him? The tears came to her eyes as she looked down at him. He rose awkwardly and came to her, patting her arm gently. "I'm sorry, Baby," he told her. The old name and the quaver in his voice whirled her back to the times when he was wont to comfort her over childish disasters. "Let's talk things over," he said, and led her back into her room.

"There's nothing to say," she told him dully.

"Yes," he said, "there's a great deal to say. I wish some things could be unsaid. Anna Marie told you something I'd rather you'd never have known."

"But it's true."

"Yes," he said, "true, as far as it goes."

"I'm going away," she told him.

"I thought you'd say that," he sighed. "I suppose you think that you have to go, now that you know this?" She nodded, and he went on: "And I suppose you think you might as well marry Bruce Nowlan?"

"What else can I do? My mother's daughter is doomed, anyhow; and if—"

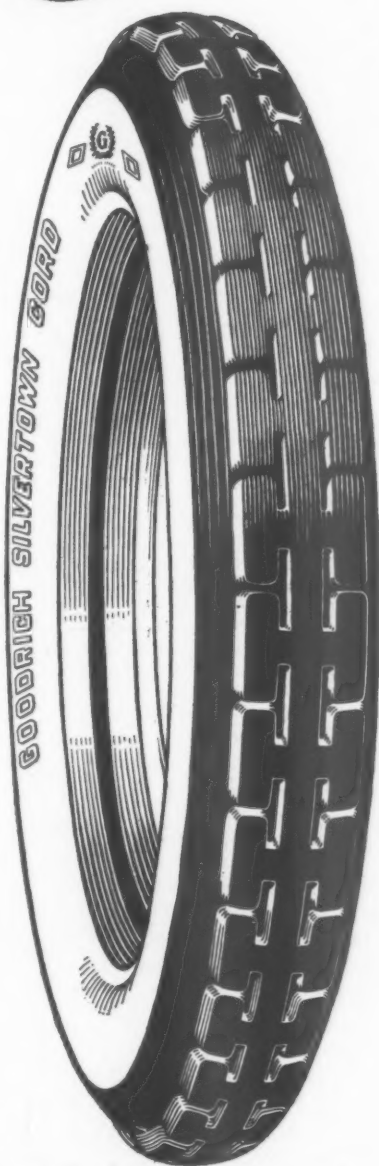
"Where do you get such notions?" he demanded of her, his old eyes shining fiercely. "What in the name of God makes you think that you've got to go to hell just because your father or your mother or your grandmother or your second cousin was a fool? In the name of the jumping Jehosaphat—"

"You've said the reason time and again." She faced him squarely. "You've said that no horse is worth considering unless he has a clear pedigree. You've said that men were like horses. You've said that heredity—"

"Heredity?" He seized on the word, whirling it as a dog with a bone. "Heredity? What's heredity got to do with you? With girls? With women? My mother was the gayest girl in the Blue Grass, and my sister went into a convent. Anna Marie's mother was the belle of Bardstown. Marcia Culbertson's mother was a gloomy grave-digger, and Marcia's the wildest woman in the Place here. What does it matter what your mother was? Or your father? It's what you have in you that counts."

"And don't you suppose that Anna Marie and I have been putting something in you through all these years? Don't you say your prayers at night as she taught you to? And brush your teeth? And scrub back of your ears? And don't you treat folks square, the way I raised you—and don't lie, or cheat, or tell all you know about girls? What's that? Heredity? No, I tell you, it's training."

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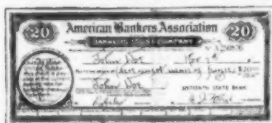
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Splendidly he turned tail on his theories, working himself up to conviction in his newfound beliefs. Now he rushed to climax. "Heredity?" he shouted. "Heredity? Hell!" And for the second time in his life in the presence of a woman, Umbrella Briggs indulged his one great talent.

UNLIKE Anna Marie, Dixie Lord did not flee from his torrential profanity, perhaps because there comes a place in despair where the only relief lies in explosions, vicarious or otherwise. Calmly she stood while he heaped anathema on the Nowlans, root, branch and crop, upon Mabel Lord, upon the memory of Carlton, upon the Deacon for his failure to guard the girl at the races, upon himself, upon theories, upon facts, upon life, death and eternity. With the magnificence of the prophet he devastated all that had combined to hurt the girl. And as he flung battalion after battalion of Biblical curses upon the enemies of her soul, Dixie Lord saw gleaming before her a beacon light. Did she have to go down on the rocks, after all? Was there a chance? She caught at the spar as he wallowed in a sea of threats.

Suddenly, too, the pathos of his rage struck her. Poor old Uncle Cassius, who had always cared for her and humored her and protected her and believed in her! That was it—believed in her! It was in his belief that he was swearing. If he hadn't believed, why else had he taken her? He had known Mabel Lord and what she was; he had seen Carlton Lord's failure: but he had brought their baby to his home and his heart. He hadn't feared heredity, then, as much as his words through the years had implied. And his wife? Hadn't she also believed in something other than predestination of blood when she had striven so valiantly to keep her safe?

"I'm not a baby any more," she said at last. "I'm not a girl any more. I'm old, older than you in my heart, tonight. I'm woman enough to see what you both have done for me. I owe it to you to do what I can do to show that good people can do a good job with pretty bad stuff. And oh, my dear,"—she looked pitifully young for all her assertions,—“I don't want to look like her. I'm sorry for her, for she's my mother; but I'm afraid!”

"There's nothing to be afraid of," he told her. "You're pretty young yet, Dixie, for all you think you're old. I don't know but what"—a slow smile went around his gray mustache—"that's the surest sign of being young. It's when you get to my age that you feel your oats. And you've a long life before you. You're going to miss the boy a little while. And you're never going to forget him, no matter what he is."



"It's great to have friends for an emergency like this."
 "It's better to have Kelly-Springfields—then you never have the
 emergency."
 -Submitted by Miss Claire Newman.

THE judges had a difficult task. There were a large number of exceedingly clever entries, but many of them had to be discarded either because they did not quite fit the picture or because they were so similar to captions suggested by two or three hundred other contestants that it was impossible to decide which had phrased the idea best.

Every letter submitted was read as it came in and was immediately either laid aside for further consideration or eliminated for one reason or another. When the closing date came the judges had over a thousand entries for final consideration. This number was gradually sifted down to fifteen. Each of the three judges then wrote down his first, second and third choice of the fifteen. When the

lists were compared, it was found that Miss Newman's contribution was the only one which had been chosen by all three judges, and a check for \$250.00 was therefore mailed to her.

A contribution from far-off Peru got two votes and so did one from a Pennsylvania farm, but the winning caption was the only one that got all three votes.

The entries came in from all over the world—from Canada, Mexico, Cuba, South America, Hawaii, the Philippines, Japan, China, France, England, Alaska and every state in the Union.

Only four contestants failed to recognize the picture as a Kelly-Springfield tire advertisement.


KELLY

Springfield

TIRE

Prize Contest Announcement

AFTER weeks of consideration of the conversations submitted by the 120,000 or more persons who sent in entries to the Kelly-Springfield Prize Contest advertised in the April issue of this magazine, the judges rendered a decision in favor of the dialogue sent in by Miss Claire Newman of 703 Mt. Prospect Ave., Newark, N. J.




Eva L. Haskett Spiceland, Ind.

Mellin's Food

Mellin's Food, prepared with milk, is a complete food for an infant. By simply varying the proportions in its preparation, it can be adapted to children of all ages.

Write for a Free Trial Bottle of Mellin's Food today

Mellin's Food Company
Boston, Mass.



Janice M. Crary Benton Harb., Mich.

LABLACHE

FACE POWDER

Ma mere—Vividly I remember the delicate fragrance of her lightly powdered cheek. Lablache—her powder—always suggestive of her complexion, beautiful as wild rose petals. More than ever I appreciate the refreshing purity of Lablache.

Refuse Substitutes

They may be dangerous. Flush. White. Pink or Cream. 65c a box of druggist or by mail. Over two million boxes sold annually. Send 10c for a sample box.

BEN LEVY CO.
French Perfumers, Dept. 8
125 Kingston St., Boston, Mass.



None of us forget our Aprils. But we're lucky if we marry our Junes."

He looked over his shoulder at the hall to see if Anna Marie were in hearing. "I had an April myself," he said. "I thought I wanted to die when it was over. But I've had a pretty good time for a good many years, and every day I thank God for what He sent me in compensation. Yours'll come, never fear."

"But can you trust me again?" Dixie said. She clutched his hands tightly. "I'll do everything I can, but will Aunt Anna Marie and you know that I'm doing it?"

"We'll know," he said. "Anna Marie's prickly sometimes, but they don't make 'em any better. I suppose you think," he sighed, "that we don't understand you because you're not our very own? You're wrong, Dixie. The people who haven't children can sometimes see deeper into the hearts of children than those who have them. Now, I'll tell you something I've learned in my knocking around: There are times when you come to the end of your rope, when you think you've lost the one thing in all the world that counts, when you wonder why you keep on living at all. Well, somewhere I read a line that hit me because it was what I'd found out. It's this:

"For every dream that dies, a truth comes true." Your dream's dead, but this is the truth that's coming true. You've fought your big fight with yourself, and you've won it, and that's finer and better and bigger than any dream in the world."

He paused at the door, rocking irresolutely on his heels. "I'll talk to Anna Marie," he said, and went down the stairs.

FOR long afterward Dixie could hear their voices as she knelt by the open window. The sight of the stars, the smell of the jasmynes, the sounds of the night wove into a requiem for the dream. A great sadness, not for herself alone but for all the waifs of the world, drifted over her. To fight it, she fled away from memories, away from fears, seeking the familiar voices.

As she hurried through the dark hall she stumbled over something, and picked it up. It was Cassius Clay's vast umbrella. Suddenly she saw it as a pilgrim's staff which a working Christian bore on his upward path. She kissed its worn old handle reverently before she crept down the stairs to where she knew that an old man and an old woman would, each in a different way, give her comforting.

THE TREASURE HOLE

(Continued from page 79)

off the Bell River mouth—a handful of rank grass, colored bright, deadly-looking green; underbrush of thorny and saw-leaved creepers; mangrove a hundred feet tall.

"And it was out of this wilderness," he said to himself, "that Frogmal combed seven hundred pounds in six months!" He sat himself down on a log—first carefully inspecting it to make sure it was not a crocodile—and leaned his head on his hands. He was too tired, too hopeless, to get up again.

Then suddenly he saw his canoe, which he had left on the mud near high-tide mark, moving as if drawn by an invisible hand!

LANE jumped to his feet with more briskness than one would have thought to be in him, and seized the bow of the canoe—a long, dug-out log she was, with a tied-on outrigger. She pulled like a led horse that wants to go home. "Lord!" said Walter Lane. "She's bewitched. The niggers seem to have shot pretty near the bull's-eye, after all." He dragged the canoe back, jumped in, and took the paddle. His weight had settled the craft, but a hearty push sent her off again. With bow headed toward the curve of the distant shore, the canoe took her own way, unaffected by Lane's vigorous paddle sweeps. He did not want to go to that ugly backwater place, sure to be full of crabs and mud; but the canoe wanted to go, and went. After a little he made no attempt to stop her progress—the thing was too astonishing.

"Of all the—" he said, and then, "Of all the dashed—" He could not find words to express his amazement. Cur-

rents he had seen and struggled with, all along the dangerous Gulf coast-line—New Guinea is the land of crazy currents and of unreliable tides; but even in Samarai, where the ebb runs seven knots an hour past the jetty, he had never struck anything like this. In the channel between the islet and the mainland, driven by who knew what wild crossing of oceanic streams outside, the flood-tide dragged the canoe as a mill-race drags a twig. Foam boiled along her bow; she left a wake like a little launch.

"By gad," said Lane, sticking in a useless paddle just to feel the force of the stream, "this beats the current that did for poor Chalmers." He knew, as all the world knows, that Chalmers, the great missionary, had gone to his doom at Goaribari, not many miles away, largely because of the resistless current that dragged his schooner in to land.

"A schooner, once she'd made the point of the bay here, would go flying in—why, by George, a B. P. steamer would, if they ever were crazy enough to come this way," thought Lane. He was getting excited now. That Frogmal's secret had something to do with this amazing current was clear to him as if the spirit of the dead man had risen from his neglected grave among the scarlet brush-flowers in Fort Moresby burying-ground, to whisper: "Here! Look here."

The canoe grounded on the sloping mud-bank, with a rush like that of a crocodile, burying her nose six inches deep. Lane, knowing that there might be difficulty in landing, had broken up a case and put the largest pieces of board into his canoe. On these, thrown down to

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A famous tire—a famous tread. Acknowledged among motorists and dealers alike as the world's foremost example of Cord tire building. Always delivering the same repeated economy, tire after tire, and season after season. The stripe around the side-walls is registered as a trade-mark in the U. S. Patent Office.



You'll find a clue to tire worth in the way the tire is sold—

AT sometime or other most of us have noticed the baffled expression of a car-owner buying a tire.

Here's a man trying to use his common sense. All that he asks for is good service at the right price.

Instead the dealer quotes a "big discount."

And then the guessing begins.

"So much off the list," says the dealer.

"How good is the tire?" replies the prospective purchaser.

"As good as any," says the dealer.

"Then why the big discount?" wonders the customer.

Two men really miles apart in their transaction because there is no confidence.

* * *

More and more the public keeps backing away from "discount" tires.

With simple logic, thousands and thousands of car-owners brush aside excuses and explanations—and put their faith in U.S. Royal Cords.

The par quality tire at a net price.

Built by a policy that stands today, tomorrow and

all the time for the best expression of what human science knows about cord pneumatics.

Sold to the user with a consciousness of what he is always entitled to—with a deep respect for confidence as the surest basis for all human transactions.

* * *

U. S. Royal Cords never have discharged their responsibilities of leadership in so far-reaching a way as now.

In the face of all tendencies to sacrifice tire standards to meet market emergencies—you will find U.S. Royal Cords defending the quality pledge which every vital industry owes to the public it serves.

As people say
everywhere

United States Tires
are Good Tires

United States Tires

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Fifty-three
Factories

The Oldest and Largest
Rubber Organization in the World

Two hundred and
thirty-five Branches



Why The Mennen Company Published My Baby Book

DEAR ANNE:

I wish I could tell you how glorious I feel about my Baby Book, which The Mennen Company published for me last Spring. It's simply wonderful the way doctors and nurses and mothers are using it and praising it—*thousands* of them!

You know, all my life I have been using Mennen Borated Talcum in my baby work—on my own skin, too, for that matter. It has always seemed just the least bit safer than anything else. It's what I call a perfectly *balanced* talcum—the proper ingredients and the right amounts, so as to be antiseptic and soothing. I believe that is the real secret of its great success on baby's petal-like skin.

And then, when The Mennen Company introduced Kora-Konia I found something I had wanted for years. It really does give "quick relief" to an irritated skin—*wonderful* for chafing and prickly heat and similar afflictions. But what pleased me most is the way it soothes a poor little infant's skin suffering from diaper rash or scalding caused by involuntary habit.

I suppose it was because of wide experience with babies in my clinical work that The Mennen Company asked me to write my Baby Book. I may have been flattered a bit, but I did see a big chance to help the greatest number of mothers in times of distress.

I hope you will tell all your mother friends to write for their copies. It's the kind of book they would ordinarily pay a dollar for. But because I have mentioned Mennen Talcum a few times, The Mennen Company is mailing it for twenty-five cents as long as the edition lasts. It comes in a plain wrapper.

Lovingly,
BELLE

THE MENNEN COMPANY
NEWARK, N. J. U. S. A.



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Aunt Belle's First Aids

An important part of Aunt Belle's Book is her Alphabetical First Aid Section—1-minute paragraphs on such troubles as the following:

Aches
Bruises
Burns
Colds
Colic
Constipation
Convulsions
Diarrhea
Eczema
Fever
Hives
Indigestion
Nosebleed
Poisoning
Prickly Heat
Rashes
Sore Throat
Vomiting



make a causeway, he stepped ashore. The mud was very deep here; it seemed to lie in a sort of pocket, many yards across. A man who fell into it would probably be drowned. He did not mean to be drowned—now.

He tied the canoe to a stake, went up the grassy slope that led from the searim, turned the corner of a clump of stilted mangrove roots—and came straight upon two white men.

HE knew them at once, though he had never, to his knowledge, seen them before. They were Hobbs and Garstrake.

Both were middle-aged, sallow with the sallowness that comes of constant fever, roughly clad, and poor in appearance. Hobbs, whom he put down as the stouter of the two, had the odd coming-to-pieces, unbraced look of the white man who has associated too long with natives; his very clothing hung upon him as a native's clothing hangs, when he confines his limbs in unaccustomed khaki and flannel. The man's gray eyes had lost the steady expression of the conquering race and seemed half-shy, half-fierce and cruel; his hair was ragged, and his graying beard had been allowed to grow.

Garstrake was a shade younger, a thought better clad, and there was more intellect in his hard face and dark eyes than in Hobbs' slacked features. Lane, become perforce a judge of men in this wild land, reckoned him to be the more dangerous of the two. An impulse that he could not have analyzed prompted him to slip behind a huge clump of root-arches before the two men, whose eyes were dazzled by the sun shining on the waters of the bay, had had time to see him. The canoe, he argued hastily, could not betray him, since it was just like those used by all the natives along the coast. He knew it was impossible to avoid the men, or to conceal his presence in the neighborhood, but he did not want to be caught at that precise spot.

Mangrove swamps are kind to fugitives, the tropic world over. Lane had no difficulty in getting out of sight, and afterward, in reaching Frogna's deserted station half an hour before the two men whom he had so feared to see discovered it and stamped up the steps onto the platform.

Lane felt a hot wave of hatred break over him as the two men came up the steps of the store. They stood in the way of his success. But he spoke them fair, and asked them to come in.

"I've taken over Frogna's job, you see," he said. To his surprise the lie slid smoothly.

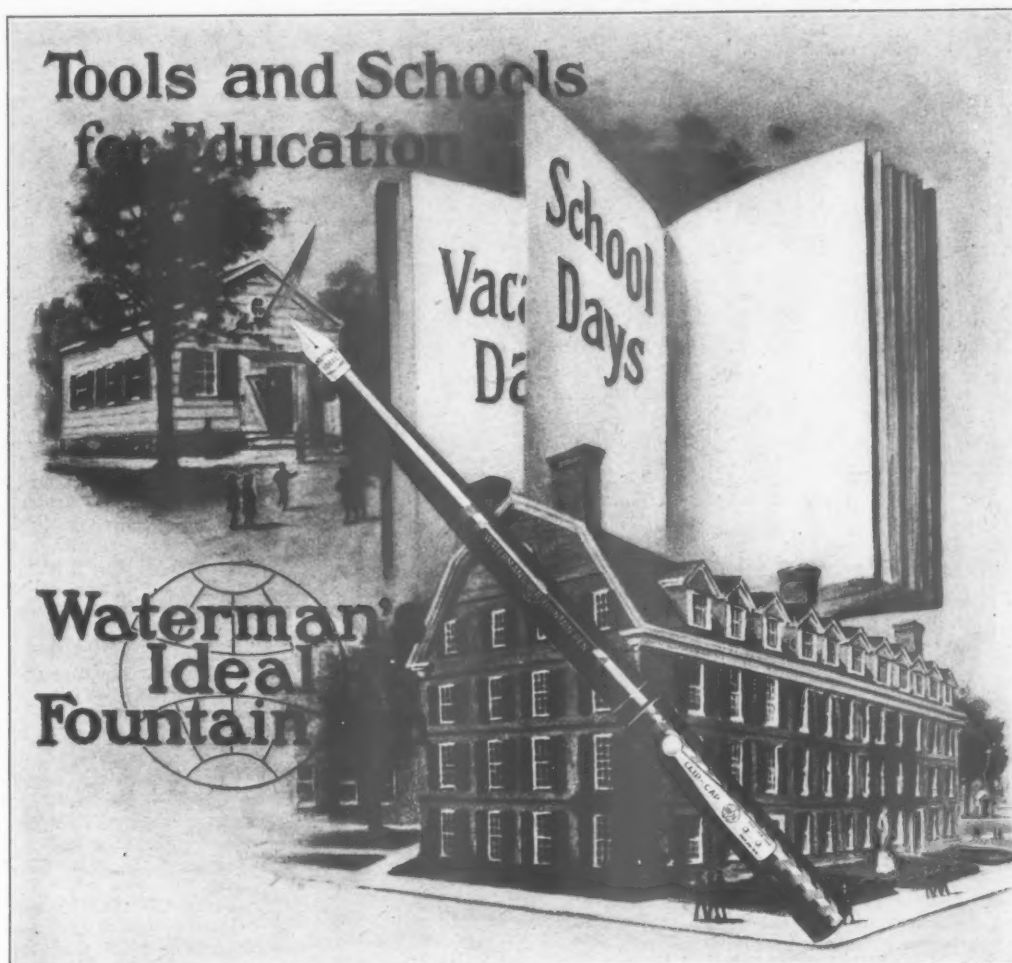
"A cursed poor job, too," said Hobbs. And Garstrake, looking around the ruinous house, said: "Why didn't you get this kennel mended up first?"

"I only arrived yesterday," was Lane's answer. "Sit down; those cases will bear. You'll have *kai-kai* with me, of course."

"We'll camp here," was all Hobbs replied.

"If you feel like having us," modified Garstrake.

"Of course, of course," assured Lane, bustling about among his tins, and wondering where their own stores were. "Sorry I haven't got a boy. I—"



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Waterman's Ideal is the world standard for quality, efficiency and durability in a fountain pen. It has made itself indispensable to business men and women, authors, doctors, lawyers, scholars—everyone in fact, who has use for pen and ink.

Three types: Regular, Safety, and Self-Filling

The regular type is dropper-filled and size for size, has the largest ink capacity of any fountain pen made.

The safety type has a smaller ink capacity but may be carried in any position, in pocket, purse or bag, without the slightest danger of leaking.

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The gold pens used in all Waterman's Ideals are tipped with Natural Iridium and are made by us for use in Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen exclusively. You can select a point that fits your need or preference exactly.

L. E. Waterman Company, 191 Broadway, N. Y.

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"More Pretty Dresses Than I Ever Had In My Life—

—and last fall I really shed tears for want of a decent dress."

"AND best of all, I not only have more pretty dresses and hats, but I am saving one-half to two-thirds of what I formerly paid for my clothes. And just think, I have only been studying dressmaking at home for three months!"

Would you, too, like to learn to design, plan and make distinctive clothes for yourself and your children? Would you like to gain so great a skill in dressmaking that you can sew for others in your own home, secure a position, or establish an independent shop of your own?

You can do it easily and quickly at home, through pleasant, spare-time study with the Woman's Institute.

It makes no difference where you live, because all the instruction is carried on by mail. And it is no disadvantage if you are employed during the day or have household duties that occupy most of your time, because you can devote as much or as little time to the course as you desire and just whenever it is convenient.

The Woman's Institute courses are practical, fascinating and complete. They begin with the very simplest stitches and seams, taking nothing for granted, and proceed by logical steps until you can design and completely make attractive and becoming dresses, coats and suits. Everything is explained in simple language, and by pictures.

Send for This 64-page Book

IT is called "Dressmaking Made Easy." It tells the full story of this great school that is bringing to women and girls all over the world the happiness of having dainty, becoming clothes, savings almost too good to be true, and the joy of being independent in a successful business. Just send a letter, post card or the convenient coupon below and, without cost or obligation, a copy of "Dressmaking Made Easy" will come to you by return mail.



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WOMAN'S INSTITUTE

Sept. 20W, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation, please send me one of your booklets and tell me how I can learn the subject marked below:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Dressmaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Millinery |
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Name.....
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Hobbs burst out into a harsh laugh. "We're short of more than a boy," he said; "we've been and lost every dashed tin and bag of our stores. We're doing a perish, Garstrake and me, till we can get something out of the niggers."

"How on earth—" began Lane, measuring out tea reluctantly.

"It was that case of gin done it. You would—" said Garstrake.

"It was you just as much!"—from Hobbs.

"Well, anyhow, the case was there, and Hobbs and me, we stepped ashore at that Hangi Delta village, and we broached the case, and—you know. Well, we had a royal time for half a week, and when we come round again, there was the ketch looted of every blooming thing, rifles and all. And only but they was expecting a Government patrol, they'd have done for us too; but the coast's safer in that way than it used to be; they let us alone. So the two of us, we did a bunk as quick as we could, because with no guns or cartridges it wasn't healthy for us there, and we ran the ketch down the coast, just the two of us, with only a fistful or so of yams we got, never mind how, and we come in here to see if the old station was still standing."

"How did you get in? It seems a risky bit of coast, with all those mud-banks," asked Lane. He wondered if they knew.

"We didn't take any chances. We moored the ketch out where she was safe, and came up the river in the dinghy. I've been in New Guinea fifteen years, and what I don't know about the west coast I can mostly guess. This place is a sort of a death-trap to anyone who don't understand the lay of things. Why, when I was a young man of thirty-five, nobody knew anything at all about this place; it was just dotted lines on the map—and I'm only what you might call middle-aged now."

"Yes," assented Lane, thinking that Garstrake lied. The man's face was bitten deep with lines of hardship and illness; his scanty beard was half gray. How he hated the brute! If only the two of them had kept away a day or two longer—and they were actually short of stores, and going to live on his!

DURING the days that followed in Frognal's ruinous house, Lane tasted bitterness almost intolerable. It was his only consolation that neither of the men had any idea he was on the same errand as themselves. They supposed his continual excursions were only attempts to resuscitate Frognal's dead trade. As for themselves, they combed the river and its villages industriously, sure, sooner or later, of finding the thing that Frognal had found—and left.

He got no farther in his search. The secret that had half-whispered itself to him drew back, and went flying down the winds of space and time, whence some strange influence had, for a moment, called it forth. When he was certain no one saw, he canoed about the island bay, passed at high tide into the millrace current and was swept ashore. He found, without surprise, traces of Frognal about the island and the beach—a brass

trouser-button, the stem of a pipe, a can-opener, half rusted away. He looked at the relics of the dead man's quest, and wished that they could speak. And the days went, and the scanty stores dwindled. And the natives of the village in the bay, barely held back by fear of "Govamen" from killing and eating the three unwanted white men, refused flatly to supply them with fish, yams, coconuts or any other form of food. What had the white men to give for it? They would see them starve before they would spare them anything.

AN inspiration seized Lane to go and explore the *dubu*—the native clubhouse, temple and communal dwelling in one. Lane was well aware that he took his life in his hands in visiting the *dubu* unasked, when he was obviously out of favor with its owners. Chalmers and Tompkins, the London missionary men, had been murdered in just that way, just in that very district. But matters were growing desperate. The food was practically gone; they were subsisting on coconuts, more or less stolen, and such scraps of sago-cake as they could buy from the natives in exchange for their diminishing store of clothes. If a boat did not come along soon, they might starve, or sink into some attack of fever from which, ill-fed, ill-lodged, ill-clothed as they were, there would be small chance of recovery.

The cannibals were sitting in groups on the *dubu* platform when he came up, squatted on their haunches like dogs. They were painted and feathered, but not more than usual; they grunted as he came in, but made no movement toward the outer edge of the platform.

He flung them his last, very last stick of tobacco, and went cautiously into the building. Rows and rows of shields, carved and painted in black, white and red, stood against the pillars; strings of skulls were hung up as a careful cook hangs onions; braining-clubs with heavy serrated stone heads, man-tall bows, sheaves of arrows—these showed in the cavelike light that came in through the high door. Lane, followed by watchful natives, went farther down the long, dark tunnel-way. Now he had come to the central part, lighted by a side door, where the tribal treasures, set on strange little altars, were kept. Skulls of some famous enemy, fitted with odd pig-snouts of bone, carved thigh- and arm-bones, feather ornaments, and—

"Good Lord!" said Walter Lane, wiping his hot forehead with his ragged sleeve.

"Goo' law!" mimicked a prancing cannibal with a long tail behind him. The Gulf native has a sense of humor, sometimes gorily expressed, but generally to be relied on. These man-eaters found Lane—whom they would have liked to devour if they had not feared the Government patrol—feeble and funny.

Lane, not heeding them, stared at a collection of curios set on a small altar all by itself. It was surely the oddest gathering of treasures ever seen in a New Guinea native house.

There was a nailbrush; there were two worn-out toothbrushes. There were pieces of chair-leg fitted with screws at

the end as steamer saloon chairs are fitted. There was a wooden spoon; there was a red satin pincushion with glass beads sewn on it; there was a merchant-service cap, water-stained and sodden; there was a woman's garter, once blue, an olive-wood match-box marked "From Jerusalem," and six pages of Plato's "Phædo," much pencil-marked. This was all that Lane observed in his first amazed stare; afterward he noted a good many other things, all of civilized make, none of much value, and every one damaged by water.

"They're all floatable," he said to himself aloud. "They would come in on the tide—that dashed tide that sets at the corner of the bay."

"Bay, bay," mimicked the comic cannibal, wagging his tail as he swung round in a mocking dance. "Floatapew!" He nipped Lane's forearm, and made a luscious noise with his lips. Lane understood him to say to the other natives that the Government of Papua was an infernal bore—or words to that effect. But the white man was hardly conscious of anything save that which was passing in his own mind. He shouldered his way through the natives, sprang down from the *dubu* platform and legged it as fast as he could from the bay.

"Floatable," was Lane's thought. "All those would have floated; they'd have come in on the current, from any ship that ever came to grief out in that dashed Gulf of Papua—and there's been some no one heard of; and the natives would have found them among the roots of the mangroves. Big floating things wouldn't come in; they'd likely get stuck on the mud-banks on the way. Things that didn't float—it might be—it might. Cases wouldn't, but then cases break up when a ship goes to the bottom, and perhaps something—well, it's a Hades of a current, anyhow; it would suck an elephant along if there was water enough, and if the elephant didn't stick on anything by the way. Lord, how tired I am! I haven't had a decent meal for days; that's why."

HE found himself very weak when he reached the island bay. He had to lie down on a big tussock of marsh-grass and let his heart quiet itself from fierce pumpings to slow, feeble beats before he could collect strength enough for what he wanted to do.

At last he got up, cut a long pole, and flinging down the bits of planking he had left among the mangroves, advanced cautiously out on the surface of the low-tide mud. It held, though the planks sank an inch or two. Lane, still panting, struck down with his pole, again—again. Nothing. He moved the planks and tried a second time, after looking over his shoulder to make sure that he was unseen. There was not a living thing in sight save the popping, clicking crabs, and one huge crane winging slowly over the swamp-land on its way to sea. Far out, the tide was on the turn; it would come running in like a mill-sludge before long.

Lane plunged the pole again. It struck something. He felt a second time and missed, felt again and caught it. He felt all round. It was smallish, hard, slippery; it rolled under the stroke. He



What is it that saps your energy and shortens your period of youth?

Sleep uncertain —finicky appetite —easily tired out

These danger signals are now known to have one deep, underlying cause

A RUN-DOWN condition has many different symptoms—perhaps it is tooth trouble, or indigestion, or over-fatigue.

If we are not full of health and vigor we cannot resist these minor ailments. We then fall off in health and perhaps pay heavily in later years by serious illness or even loss of life.

Scientists now know that the deep underlying cause of these various ailments is often lack of one single element in food.

The lack of this element—vitamine—is largely responsible for the lowered vitality of the thousands who succumb to old age diseases before they are forty years old.

Today men and women are getting this essential food factor by eating Fleischmann's Yeast, for yeast is its richest known source.

Fleischmann's Yeast builds up the body tissues, keeps the body resistant to disease.

In addition, because of its freshness (you get it fresh daily) Fleischmann's Yeast helps the intestines in their elimination of poisonous waste matter.

Eat 1 to 3 cakes a day of Fleischmann's Yeast before or between meals. Have it on the table at home. Have it delivered at your office and eat it at your desk. Ask for it at noontime at your lunch place.

You will like its fresh, distinctive flavor and the clean, wholesome taste it leaves in your mouth. Only one precaution: if it causes gas, dissolve it first in very hot water. This does not affect the efficacy of the yeast. Place a standing order for Fleischmann's Yeast with your grocer and get it fresh daily. Keep it in a cool, dry place until ready to use.

Send 4c in stamps for the valuable booklet, "The New Importance of Yeast in Diet." So many requests are coming in daily for this booklet that it is necessary to make this nominal charge to cover cost of handling and mailing. Address THE FLEISCHMANN COMPANY, Dept. EE-30, 701 Washington Street, New York, N. Y.

Laxatives gradually replaced

Fleischmann's Yeast is a corrective food, always fresh, and better suited to the stomach and intestines than laxatives. It is a food—and cannot form a habit. In tested cases normal functions have been restored in from 3 days to 5 weeks. In long standing cases do not discontinue the customary cathartic abruptly but gradually reduce the amount taken. — Eat from 1 to 3 cakes of Fleischmann's Yeast a day.



How every Girl can be at her best

"MY dear, I want to talk to you about something that I think every girl ought to know.

"You know how much a girl's daintiness and charm have to do with her success and happiness in business and social life. She can't afford to let the least thing mar that sweet daintiness.

"She may be beautifully gowned; she may take infinite pains with her lingerie, her hair, her hands and the other little touches that mean so much.

"But—this is what I want to talk to you particularly about—

"All this daintiness is completely ruined by the odor of perspiration and the other body odors to which people are subject.

"Perspiration is nature's way of carrying off the poisons generated by the system. And, of course, no one wants to check this wholesome process.

"But that is no reason why people should be bothered by the odor of perspiration.

"Mum" is the word

"Every morning I apply a little 'Mum' and enjoy the comfortable assurance that I shall be free from all body odors for the rest of the day and evening. I can go to a dance, theatre, any place where it is crowded and warm, and know that I am going to be entirely free from this embarrassment.

"No, 'Mum' does not check perspiration or other body functions. It just takes the odors away. And there is nothing that can irritate the skin or harm the daintiest gown.

"So, that's why I say to you most earnestly, 'Mum' is the word.

"And then there's another thing—the hair under the arms and on the limbs. I have found an exceptional hair-remover called Evans's Depilatory Outfit. I like it because it removes the hair with so little trouble and leaves the skin so smooth and comfortable. Evans's Depilatory is particularly useful because it comes as a complete outfit ready for use."

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withdrew the pole, and forcing himself to patience, went ashore and pulled a length of canvasy leaf-sheath from the nearest young coco-palm. With a string of bark fiber he tied it roughly into the shape of a bag and secured it to the end of the pole. Then, pressing bag and pole down into the mud, as far as his arms would reach, he fished again. . . . Caught!

He hauled out the impromptu dredge, it was heavy now with something entangled in the folds. Carefully he made his way to solid land, pulled open the dredge, and found—a tin, a round, rusty tin, and no more.

But Walter Lane, seeing the tin, took it in both hands, swung it above his head, and burst out into husky song. The refrain of a two-year-old success of the music-halls, full of faded topicalities, sent a ghostly flavor of Broadway and Leicester Square over the black empty stretch of steaming mud-land, where the tides of the Coral Sea were beginning to flow again.

"I'll see them," said Lane, breaking off his song. "I'll see it all. I'll get them to take me on again, and manage a transfer to London—and Lord, Lord, but it'll be heaven. Where did I put my knife? Damn these long tins, they roll so! What is it? Not corn, I hope to heaven! It smells—it's—Lord, it's sausages!"

He was sitting on the tussocky grass, the tin between his knees, his knife alongside. Sausages! The smell drove him wild, famished as he was. He pulled them out of the tin in pieces, and crammed them into his mouth. They were smoked, red-fleshed, delicious. The pound did not seem a pound; it could not have been—why he had only had a dozen mouthfuls, and they were all but gone!

"Ships," he said to himself between bites, "ships—lost, maybe one, maybe two. Lots of tins in them, lots of everything. Big things went to glory on the shoals away out, or maybe sunk in deep water. Little light floating things the natives got. Little heavy things that roll and roll got caught in that Hades of a tide, and worked under water in and in, beneath the mud, right here. My God, there must be thousands!

"No wonder Frog—"

HE broke off in his thought, and looked at the tin. It was the same in pattern, size and contents as some of those he had brought down himself from Port Moresby—the cheap lot bought from the little trader who had got them no one knew where. "Frogna's trove," he thought. "Froggy must have been carting them up in his launch by the hundred dozen to the stores, and selling them quietly—probably said they were old war stuff; I would have—I mean I will." He busied himself with calculations as he savored the last morsel of sausage. "There's more where that came from," he thought, and went a-fishing again.

In ten minutes he had fished out a score of tins; the bed of the swamp seemed to be tins and nothing else. He knew them by their shapes mostly; this one was salmon; that was fruit; here was a tin of solid meat; this would be some-

thing fancy. He opened and ate two or three, and they were as the food of the gods. He felt defiant, strong, three times the man he had been that morning.

"And we starving in the hut, with all that chuck waiting!" he said. The thought of Hobbs and Garstrake, hungry, chewing scraps of coconut that their stomachs had come to loathe, crossed his mind; but he did not soften toward them.

"They came and discovered me," he thought. "They ate my stores. They're a pair of hard cases, anyhow; they may just look after themselves."

When Lane went back to the hut, the two men, sitting on the platform, greeted him with more emphasis than was usual.

"Thought you was never coming back," said Hobbs, his fowl-like elderly neck stretching out of his torn shirt as he leaned down towards the ground. "Hurry up; you don't know what we've got."

Garstrake, silently, chewing a bit of leaf that tasted something like tobacco, jerked his head toward the door of the hut and pointed in.

"Smell something?" he asked.

Lane was aware, now, that an odor of meaty food, long unknown to the hut and its occupants, had begun to steal out on the cooling air.

"What is it?" he asked, climbing in. Garstrake took a small, a very small brown object from a grid of sticks.

"Pigeon, don't you see?" he said. "Oddest piece of luck in the world—Hobbs brought it down with a stone he was throwing at the wild mangoes. Wouldn't have hit three times in a hundred. We cooked him and waited for you. Where the" (several things) "have you been all this time?"

"Out in the village. I don't want any."

"Don't want—did you get anything from the nigs?"

"On the contrary," said Lane, speaking precisely, as he did when he wanted to show his superiority to these rough pioneers who despised him, "on the contrary, they expressed a strong desire to dine on me."

"You wouldn't be worth eating," commented Garstrake not unkindly, scanning Lane's thin arms and ill-developed legs and shoulders.

"The boy's wasting right down to nothing," declared Hobbs, hacking with his penknife at the pigeon. He cut it into three fairly equal parts and gave the largest to Lane, immediately setting his own ill-favored teeth into another.

"Here, hold on! I can't take this," cried Lane, trying to give it back. Garstrake, who had wolfed his in one large mouthful and was spitting out the bones as he chewed, shook his head at him, motioning with an expressive hand. Hobbs, eating more slowly, but greedily for all that, said with half-full mouth:

"Take it and be hanged to you. We don't want manners here."

"I can't," persisted Lane.

"Why? Had a five-coursè dinner, with wines and cigars, out there in the swamp?" asked Hobbs satirically.

It was so near the truth that Lane could only stare.

"Eat it!" thundered Garstrake, suddenly becoming tyrannous. "Eat it, or

"I'll clout your head." And Lane, hypnotized, ate the little bit of flesh with lips that trembled. His eyes were warming with tears. Something was beginning to hurt him intolerably, but he could not for the life of him tell what it was.

Afterward the two New Guineans talked and played cards with the remains of a ragged pack. Lane, lying on the floor with his head hidden against the wall, listened to the sounds of night in the swamps outside—the calling of owls, the papery rattling of sea-winds in the sago palms, once and again the long, siren-sounding bellow of a great marsh crocodile.

That indefinable pain was pinching sharply now. He still did not know what it was, but he felt moved to soothe its smart with various statements made seriously to himself. The fact that Hobbs and Garstrake had come along and eaten up his stores was one.

Further, something fierce in him woke up at last and said: "Findings, keepings!"

IN the morning there was coconut for breakfast, and a mess of very loathly crab. Hobbs simply arose and spat his share out at the door. Then he sat down and looked at the brazen shield of the water-covered swamps with eyes that seemed dimmer than yesterday.

"I'm not so young as I was," he said.

"Damn the boats," said Garstrake. "There ought to have been something along by now."

"Give it best?" asked Hobbs.

"No!" Garstrake swore, conclusively, and with embroideries.

"Perhaps we could work the ketch, ourselves, down to the Government station?" suggested the older man. "No use starving here."

"It's eighty miles, and the wind dead wrong. Yes, I dare say we might, but again we mightn't. I'm not starved yet by a long chalk."

"Nor I," said Hobbs, heaving himself up. His face looked yellow, and his clawlike hands were unsteady. "We'll go and hunt the other bank of the river."

"Right-o," answered Garstrake bravely.

"Youngster,"—they had taken to addressing Lane by all sorts of youthful names,—"you can stop here, or go, as you like, but you wont be no use to us. It aint any new chum's job, finding out what Frogna kept hid." They had been very candid of late about their object in visiting the river. Lane felt it was no compliment to him.

"I'll stay," was all he said. His mind was in a turmoil comparable only to the race and eddy of that wild current on the bay, but he could not—yet—determine its nature. He only knew that he wanted to go out to the swamp with his knife and fishing pole, and eat and eat and eat—but that he was not going to do it. Why?

In the dusk of the hut he chewed coconut, dozed, played solitaire and waited. With noon returned, white, beaten out but not a whit defeated, the men Hobbs and Garstrake. Hobbs had a potato in his hand—one small sweet potato, from which he kept his eyes determinedly turned away.

"Your whack, youngster," he said,

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holding it out to Lane. "We got two, one biggish and one littlish. The nigs were having their *kai-kai*, and we saw them from the bush, and they got up and cut for a moment, because one of their best dogs got in holts with an alligator; so while they was saving him, we grabbed the potatoes, and Garstrake and me shared one, and brought you yours. There was other *kai-kai*," he added candidly, "but seeing as it happened to be their day for long pig, we thought we'd leave it go."

Lane nodded, not shocked—he had seen too much of the Gulf country to turn sick at the thought of cannibalism, nowadays; but the vision of home, and of picture-shows, and Sundays upriver, swung before his eyes again more pleasantly than ever. There wasn't enough of the treasure-trove to change the fortunes of three men! There wasn't enough to go round.

"Take your potato," urged Garstrake. "There was just enough to go round."

It came like an echo. Lane looked at Garstrake wildly. "No," he said. "I'm sick." And he went in again and lay down, with his face to the wall. He spoke no more, while Garstrake and Hobbs unemotionally divided and ate the potato, rested, slept, and fared forth on the search again. But now he knew—he knew what the pinching pain was; he could put a name to it—remorse.

"Hang it," he said suddenly, sitting up in the empty hut. "I'm doing nothing I shouldn't. They had my stores. They came—"

"Your share, youngster," sounded in his ears. He saw the faces of the men as they went out again—white, weary, undefeated.

"Oh, Lord!" he almost shouted, "can't they take the ketch and go down to the station when they're done out? I'm not hindering them. I'm not bound to—"

"There was just enough to go round," echoed in Hobbs' voice, a hungry voice.

Walter Lane got to his feet, and slowly, uncertainly, went out.

RETURNING toward set of sun, tired out to the bone, hunger-sick, almost defeated and void of hope at last, the men Hobbs and Garstrake saw a great smoke going up from the hut.

"Has he got it on fire?" one said. But the sight of Lane himself, strolling toward them in the sunset light, answered their fears.

"Likely he's had a chill," said the other. "He seemed sort of sick at dinner-time."

"Dinner-time!" said Hobbs with a hoarse laugh.

"Odd what tricks a bloke's fancy will play him when he's hungry," mused Garstrake. "I could almost take my black oath I smelt things to eat."

Lane, looking not at all like a sick man, met them on the track.

"Found nothing," announced Garstrake. "No chuck this time, youngster. Just 'crack hardy,' and pull in our belts tonight; that's what we must do."

"Oh, must we?" said Lane. "What would you like if you could have it?"

"Anything that never crawled in a swamp or grew on a tree," answered Garstrake inattentively. He walked like

an older man tonight; his eyes were sinking in.

"I would like," said Lane loudly, "cream of tomato soup, three tins, one each, and salmon—hot; and fried hot sausages. Green peas,"—his voice rose to a shout,—"*asparagus*, three ox-tongues, plum pudding, peaches, small Marie biscuits and cheese. Hip-hip-hip hooray! One more! And a tiger. Hip-hip-hip hooray!"

"The youngster's mad," said Hobbs, staring at him.

"Am I? Is your nose mad? Do you smell anything?" shouted Lane. He led the two up the steps into the house, dragged them across the threshold and showed them, in the light of a blazing fire, a feast—a royal feast—laid out in opened and heated tins. "Now say I'm mad," he cried.

They did not say anything. They were too fully occupied for many glorious minutes.

"If this is a dream," sighed Garstrake presently, his mouth full of peaches and plum pudding, "don't wake me yet, for God's sake."

"Anyone who can dream them sausages had better take lodgings in bed for the rest of his life," contributed Hobbs, a tin in each hand.

Lane, who had thought he was satisfied, was finding a biscuit spread with cheese went well on the top of things in general. He too had little to say.

"Youngster," said Garstrake in tones muffled by ox-tongue, "you've found Froggal's find—I know you have; and it's a" (embroidered) "good find too. But where did you get it?"

Lane, swelling with pride, and with the contents of half a dozen tins, answered at large.

"I didn't mean to tell you," he ended, the ready tears coming to his eyes,—like many men, he was sentimental when well fed,—"*but you were so decent, and the pigeon and potato—*"

"You went shares with your *kai-kai*, didn't you?" asked Garstrake quite without emotion.

"Why, yes—" He did not care to say how unwilling the gift had been.

"Well, then! Pass me the soup. I reckon I could begin again."

Hobbs spoke, and in his voice was an accent new to all the three.

"Lane," he said, "you're a sport, damme if you aint! You heard us on the wharf. How did I know? Well, I guessed, of course, 'cause I remembered seeing some one clear away. You beat us at our game. Blessed if I thought you had it in you!" He did not reach out and shake hands as a man in the motion pictures would have done (Lane felt), but his tone, and the use of the name, showed that the new chum was counted a new chum no longer.

The glittering visions rose once more, and died—died.

Lane reached for the bush-leaves that tasted like tobacco.

"Somehow," he confided to the air in general, filling his pipe, "I was scared of this dashed country. It's odd, but I'm not now; I feel as if she'd given in to me."

And Papua, queen with blood upon her lips, smiled, conquered.

ONCE AT DROWN- ING RIVER

(Continued from page 74)

struments it contained, some bandages and tablets.

"You would see him, monsieur?" she asked, recovering her self-control. "Come this way!"

Taking his thermometer, the factor followed Hortense Lecroix into a small bedroom where the sick man lay moaning in delirium. An examination of the wound in the forearm, the swollen lymphatic glands, the high temperature, all indicated immediate action necessary. Then he explained rapidly the situation to the anxious girl. If she would take the responsibility, he was willing to try to save Lecroix. He could not promise; it all depended on her father's vitality and general condition.

So it was agreed.

With the aid of Mademoiselle Lecroix and the Cree woman, Stuart opened, cleaned and dressed the wound. Then insisting that Hortense Lecroix take some much-needed rest, he sat with the Indian woman in the living-room waiting to learn the effects of the operation on the temperature of the patient.

IN a few hours Lecroix' temperature had materially dropped. When Stuart told the silent servant what that meant, that Lecroix was better, the swarthy face of the Cree lighted in a smile, and for the first time that night she offered a remark:

"You good medicine man, m'sieu! You weesh Ma'm'selle for squaw?"

Stuart knew the Indian character. He was not surprised by the bluntness of the question, but in the color of his bronzed face she had her answer.

"Ah-hah!" she said, nodding gravely. "You strong man, M'sieu' Stuart'. You feex Black Jack. He seeek een hees neck long tam. He keel you for sure, m'sieu'."

Stuart had paid little attention to the warning of Baptiste, but this came from the inside. Black Jack was still nursing his revenge for the beating of the previous summer.

Glad of the turn of the conversation from Hortense Lecroix to Black Jack, Stuart amused himself by suggesting:

"You tell Black Jack that M'sieu' Stuart is big medicine man. He will put devils into Black Jack if he doesn't behave himself."

This was not lost on the Cree, who, within a few hours, had been witness to the crude but seemingly successful efforts of the white magician.

The entrance of Hortense Lecroix put an end to the conversation.

The sick man was sleeping. His vitality was fighting off the poison, Stuart told the girl, now buoyed with hope. Looking outside, where the gray dawn streaked the east, Stuart saw that the snow had ceased with the wind.

With the assurance that he could do nothing more for her father, who was patently better, he promised to return later in the day. As the tall Scot took her hand at the door, she said:



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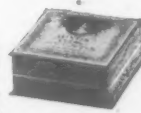
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"I shall nevair forget how kind, how good, monsieur, you have been." Then she burst forth impulsively: "Oh, why ees there so much of hate een the world? We have lived so near as strangers een all this wilderness; now we shall be friends, monsieur, for you have saved the life of my dear father."

"Yes, I hope we shall always be friends, mademoiselle." Then he asked: "You were told of my meeting Lafitte last summer?"

"Oh, Monsieur Stuart, I know it was not the truth, what Lafitte told. He insulted you. I do not like him; he is a bad man."

"Yes, he insulted me. I am glad you did not believe whatever he said. I regretted having trouble with one of your father's men."

"It ees nothing, monsieur."

Stuart stood in the open door, about to pass out.

Then, voicing feebly that within his heart which clamored for expression, he said:

"One thing I should like to ask you, mademoiselle—did you mean, *au revoir*, on the portage that day we met?"

Her eyes dropped, then rose to his: "Yes, monsieur, I meant, *au revoir*, on the portage last summer."

But as though embarrassed by her frankness, she added: "Why, because the companees are rivals for the fur, should we not be neighborly, monsieur?"

An impetuous answer rose to Stuart's lips, but he choked it; and with an "*Au revoir, mademoiselle!*" he went out into the morning.

WHEN Stuart started for the French post, alone, that afternoon, he carried his rifle. On his way he noticed a dark object moving in the scrub of the shore ahead. Reckless though his chief might be, that watchdog Baptiste was taking no chances.

Stuart found his patient much improved. Lecroix' vitality was winning out. When Stuart entered the bedroom, Lecroix' black eyes under their bushy brows sought his.

"My daughter has told me, monsieur," he said in a low voice. "You have great gratitude from me." Then he turned his head away.

Evidently to owe his life to a Hudson's Bay man was an unpleasant pill for the proud Lecroix to swallow.

In the living-room Hortense, in whom joy in the factor's announcement that her father's rugged constitution was winning had already worked a miracle of change, told Stuart something of her life. Lecroix, an officer of French colonial troops in Algeria, had on the death of her mother accepted a position with the fur company, bringing his daughter with him to Canada.

As she spoke of her life at Drowning River, with its short, magic summer, marked by the journey down the great Albany to the Bay; its winter, when, imprisoned in the white silence of the endless snows, she found her violin and books the sole comforters of the laggard days, the natural charm of the girl took deeper and deeper hold of the imagination of Stuart. Thrall to the magic with which she held him, the factor of Mamatawan, reticent with men, unconsciously

revealed secret places of his nature hitherto inviolate.

The entrance of the Cree woman with a lamp brought Stuart to his feet.

"Mademoiselle, forgive me. I have stayed too long."

"No, monsieur," she laughed, "you must not forget you are now both the friend and the *docteur*, and so, doubly welcome."

That night Stuart swung home in the dark, singing an old Scotch ballad. He had won her confidence, her friendship, but—what of her heart? Well, time alone would tell.

AS the days passed, Lecroix grew rapidly better. Finally, when danger from infection had passed, Stuart sewed up the incisions which had saved the Frenchman's life, taking a surreptitious pleasure in making the grateful but taciturn Lecroix wince in the process.

But when the factor left his bed, his presence in the living-room put a speedy end to Stuart's *têtes-à-tête* with his daughter. Although profuse in his thanks for the service done him, Lecroix' manner when the three were together unmistakably indicated that the growing friendship between his daughter and the Scotchman did not meet with his whole-hearted approval.

The Scotchman was making the last call on his patient in a medical capacity. He had come to take out his stitches. In fact, he had put off this task to the last possible moment. He was waiting for Lecroix to return from the trade-house and was alone with Hortense Lecroix for the first time since her father had left his bed.

"This is my last visit, mademoiselle," he said, hoping to draw her out. "I came to remove the stitches from your father's arm. He will need me no more now."

The dark eyes of the girl lifted in surprise.

"Last visit, monsieur? You will come still, as a friend, certainly. Will you not?"

This was his opening, and he took full advantage of it.

"Your father, mademoiselle, does not seem to approve my coming as a friend."

"My father does not approve?" she broke in, a great wave of color sweeping her face to the crown of heavy hair. "I do not understand what you say. You have saved his life. You are my—our friend. He is very grateful—my father. We desire you to see us—to come often."

There was an insistent note in her voice, a tone of command that set hope high in his heart as he said: "I wish to come, very much, mademoiselle; but if your father does not desire it—"

The dark eyes were flashing now; her high spirit voiced itself in her words:

"My father is not impulsive, monsieur, but he and I wish you to come to us whenever you desire. We do not forget so soon, monsieur." The voice of the girl broke slightly as she finished.

Stuart thrilled at the realization that she understood, and intended that her father's attitude should be ignored, that he should continue to come to Drowning River as a friend.

The entrance of Lecroix changed the subject.

As Stuart left to return home, Hor-

tense Lecroix followed him to the door. In a low tone, vibrant with sincerity, she said:

"Please, Monsieur Stuart, do not think us so base. You have made yourself my friend when you found me in despair. How could you think of such a thing? I—we wish you to come—often! *Au revoir!*"

GORDON STUART was snowshoeing up the river, hugging to his heart those last intimate, half-whispered words:

"You have made yourself my friend, when you found me in despair."

The light had begun to die when he reached the black spruce halfway to Mamatawan. He stopped for an instant to kick the balled snow from the meshes beneath his moccasins.

"She is my friend," he said aloud. "Some day, perhaps, she—"

A rifle-shot rang out on the freezing air. Stuart swayed a step forward, stopped, then reeled into the trail. Two shots, close together, followed shortly in the spruce.

At last Black Jack had struck in the dark.

Presently a figure moved through the scrub on the shore and ran out on the ice toward the motionless form in the snow. The runner had approached within a few yards, when the rifle of the factor of Mamatawan exploded full in his face.

Swerving to the rear of the man on the trail, the runner cried:

"Don't shoot, m'sieu! Eet ees Baptiste!" And the head man dropped to his knees beside his half-conscious chief, whose nerves, numbed by shock, had finally responded to the iron will in one supreme effort at self-defense.

"Were you heet?" hoarsely demanded Baptiste, whose swart features, twisted with fear, were smeared with fresh blood from a furrow through the scalp.

But the factor of Mamatawan had passed beyond speech.

As Baptiste lifted the limp form, the crimsoned snow beneath the left shoulder marked the place of exit of the bullet. Then, rapidly emptying the magazines of both rifles into the air, the sinewy Cree swung the heavy body of his chief to his back and started for home. A half-mile up the trail Esau, lashing a dog-team to the limit of their speed, met Baptiste and his burden.

"Meester Stuar! By Gar! Black Jack. I hear de shot at de post!" he gasped as they put the unconscious Stuart, muffled in blankets, on the sled and urged the dogs upriver.

To the anxious questioning of Esau regarding Stuart's wound and the blood on Baptiste's face, the sole answer of the Cree had been: "Shot in shoulder! *Wibatch! Quick! Marche!*"

Near the post Andrew Scott, with an excited group of armed Company men, met the dog-team on the trail.

"Stuart, shot!" Scott groaned. "Black Jack's work!"

"Tak' heem to de post and feex de shoulder; eet bleed bad," cried Baptiste; and while Scott and Esau hurried in to the post with the sled, the head man spoke to the clamoring group of Crees in their native tongue:

"My heart is sick. At the place of the black spruce Stuart was shot by



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Name..... Present Position..... Address.....

Black Jack. I, Baptiste, knowing that some day this would be, was on the hill above, looking, but my eyes are the eyes of an old man, and I saw nothing. He lay in the small trees like a lynx watching the bull-moose whom he fears. When he shot, I quickly found him. He will not lie again in the young spruce like the coward lynx. He is there, now, in the snow. We shall go and take him on a sled as a present to the French."

So they went to the black-timbered point where they found the frozen body of Lafitte lying near the shore, with its set face grimacing horribly in the death he had intended for another. A bullet through the heart and a crimson smear in the matted hair witnessed the fact that the eyes of Baptiste, after all, were not the eyes of an old man.

Then, escorted by Baptiste and a sullen file of Crees, Black Jack Lafitte made his last journey to Drowning River.

WHEN the head man reported back to Andrew Scott on his return from his grim mission, he found Stuart in bed, his wound dressed and bandaged, raving in the delirium of a high fever.

Standing beside his stricken chief, the tall half-breed muttered in remorse:

"Baptiste watch for dees t'ing, M'sieu' Stuar'. He know Black Jack. But Baptiste, he not know you go to Drown-
een' Rivière today, so he get dere too slow. Wal, m'sieu', Black Jack, he fire hees las' shot from de bush."

In the living quarters Scott drew from the Cree the details of the affair down-
river.

"You say you got to the point as Stuart was coming up the trail, but didn't see anything?"

"Oui, I got dere too slow, or I fin' Black Jack's tracks in de snow w'en he come up rivière."

"W'en M'sieu' Stuar' reach de black spruce, I was on de ridge. Dere I see not'ing. Black Jack, he shoot from de shore, an' I see heem. Den I geeve heem w'at he geeve M'sieu' Stuar'."

"When did you get that?" asked Scott, pointing to the blood-matted hair on Baptiste's forehead.

"Wal, I see Black Jack stiff on de snow lak a rabbit, and I run out on de ice to M'sieu' Stuar'. I t'ink he dead too, but w'en I come close, he move an'—whish! I get de bullet een de hair. He t'ink Baptiste ees Black Jack."

"Ah, that explains it! He was game to the end!"

"M'sieu' Stuar', he strong man for sure; he ver' seck, but he shoot hees gun one tam and den he sleep. I fire eight, ten shot, and pack heem on de back for Mamatawan."

"When you turned Black Jack's body over to Lecroix, what did he say?"

"He feel ver' bad. He say Stuar' save hees life, and now hees man, Black Jack, shoot M'sieu' Stuar'."

"Did you see the Mademoiselle?"

"Oui, she run out an' ask de trouble. W'en she hear M'sieu' Stuar' shot, she look ver' seck an' go to de house. W'at you t'ink, M'sieu' Stuar' he ver' bad?"

"Yes, he's got a dangerous wound, but I don't think the bullet touched his lungs. Esau and I stopped the bleeding with a compress."

"You t'ink he leeeve?"

"I don't know. He's got a good chance, with his strength."

"Ah-hah!" The head man expelled the breath from his lungs in a deep sigh and shook his head. "Baptiste, he got dere too slow."

Scott dressed the furrow in the Cree's scalp and sent him to his shack. Later, Esau was sitting up with Scott to take care of the sick man, whom they had bound to his bed with sheets to prevent his loosening the bandages in delirium. Out in the kitchen the cook swayed to and fro in her chair to the low wailing of a Cree dirge for the master whom she, Indian-like, already numbered with the spirits of those who had taken the long trail from which there is no return.

The howling of the post dogs aroused the drowsy watchers.

"Who can that be, Esau?"

"Old man from below sen' dog-team to ask for de healt' of Meester Stuar'," suggested Esau ironically.

The clamor of the huskies increased, and after a space voices sounded outside.

Esau answered a gentle knock, to disclose in the doorway a woman muffled in furs, whose dark eyes, haunted with fear, questioned the blank face of Andrew Scott.

"I am Mademoiselle Lecroix," she faltered. "Monsieur Stuart, is he terrible hurt? Oh, tell me, monsieur, is there hope?"

"He is badly wounded, mademoiselle, but we trust he'll pull through. Wont you come in?"

Hortense Lecroix, followed by her Cree woman, entered the room.

"Will you take off your coat? It is hot in here," stammered the confused Scott, his eyes wide with wonder at the loveliness of the girl and her presence at Mamatawan without her father.

"Thank you, monsieur!"

As she removed her fur hood, exposing the wealth of raven hair, Scott's face frankly reflected his admiration. It was clear indeed why Stuart had found it necessary to make so many trips to the French post.

A GROAN from the bedroom of the wounded man reached their ears.

Hortense Lecroix turned a white face to the clerk.

"Monsieur, you are embarrassed that I come here alone, with my servant. It is much that I ask, but I ask it of you. I come to return to Monsieur Stuart the kindness he gave to my father—to me. I ask—I beg you to permit me to remain here and aid."

At the unexpected request the dumfounded clerk flushed, coughed, then found his voice.

"I am sure, mademoiselle, you may stay; you can have my room there. It will be a great help to have a white woman. The Crees know so little—"

She interrupted: "We shall make no trouble. Just one room for my servant and myself. You are verree kind."

Then she said: "May I see Monsieur Stuart, onlee one moment?"

Scott led her to the bedroom, where the fever-racked factor lay bandaged and bound.

The clerk heard her catch her breath as the dim light from a lamp fell on

the flushed features of the man to whom, but a few hours before, she had said: "We do not forget so soon, monsieur."

Hortense Lecroix had kept her word; she had not forgotten.

Then she left the bedroom.

SCOTT had urged Hortense Lecroix to get some rest, as he and Esau were to sit up with the sick man, when for the second time that night the dogs of Mamatawan started a furor of yelping outside.

"Your father, mademoiselle?" suggested Scott as she looked at him questioningly.

The features of Hortense Lecroix set with determination; her color returned, and the look of weariness changed to one of defiance as she said, going to the window and peering out into the starlit stockade:

"Monsieur, I regret to make you this unpleasantness. Will you be so kind as to leave my father and me alone when he arrives?" She turned to Scott with the wraith of a smile, but in her eyes flashed the fires of an indomitable will.

"If you will allow me to stay, monsieur, I shall not go back to Drowning Rivière so long as I may help Monsieur Stuart."

Then Esau entered the room, followed by Lecroix, whose face and manner were marked by the great mental strain under which he labored. Ignoring the presence of his daughter, he said to Scott:

"Monsieur, I am in great distress to hear of Monsieur Stuart. I owe heem my life. To have heem attack' by one of my men, eet ees terrible. Lafitte had cause to die. Yes, it ees right!"

Then Lecroix lost his grip on himself and continued excitedly:

"But my daughter, she have no place here—a young woman een dese post! We have much gratitude to Monsieur Stuart. We have pain een our hearts for heem dat he ees wounded; but monsieur, eet ees not of propriete for her to remain here, a girl unmarried."

Hortense Lecroix watched her father during his speech, with level eyes which shone with the fixity of her purpose. When he ceased speaking and turned to her, she nodded to Scott, who straightway left the room with Esau.

Ten minutes later Lecroix left the factor's quarters, and lashing his dogs out to the river trail, disappeared into the night. His daughter had won. . . .

Anxious days followed for those who watched at the bedside of the wounded man—days in which fever and delirium, and the failure of the wound to heal, made hope of his recovery seem futile. During this time of anxiety and despair the ministrations and aid of his tireless assistant had become indispensable to Andrew Scott. So cool and self-contained she seemed, and yet so gentle a nurse, that the curious clerk changed his mind daily as to whether Hortense Lecroix loved the man whose iron constitution was fighting doggedly for his life, or whether she had come to Mamatawan to pay a debt of honor—to make such recompense as lay in her power, to the man who had given her father back to her and had been so basely rewarded.

Then, one day came a change; the fever turned; the wound was healing;

and one who had wandered out to the frontiers of death slowly retraced his steps.

One morning Gordon Stuart waked from a refreshing sleep, conscious of his surroundings.

"Then it was not a dream!" he sighed as Hortense Lecroix tiptoed lightly into the room in house-moccasins.

Her face lighted with surprise. He was better. He knew her.

"Dream, what do you mean?" she whispered, bending over him.

"Why, seeing you here. It seemed as if you had been here, when I waked this morning; but I thought it a dream."

She smiled into the deep-set gray eyes in the haggard face, eyes that looked hungrily up at her.

"*Shish!* You must not talk, monsieur. You need all your strength." Then she swiftly left him.

And neither from the overjoyed Scott, nor the Cree woman who came for a moment to see him, could he obtain light on Hortense Lecroix' presence at Mamatawan. The house was under strict orders from the nurse not to talk to the man who so lately had fought his way out of the shadows. So Stuart gave it up, content in the wonder of it—the joy of knowing she had come to him in his dire need of her.

DAYS passed, and the people of Mamatawan were preparing for such a celebration of Christmas as the post had never known, for had not the Great Manitou given M'sieu' Stuart his life? The fur-hunters were gathering from the

frozen valleys for the trade and revels. Daily the dog-teams from forest and muskig jingled in to the post, and when the Crees learned how Black Jack Lafitte had met his deserts at the hands of Baptiste, and that the factor would live, tepee and trade-house rang with laughter and rejoicing.

The day before Christmas Stuart sat propped up in bed, his left shoulder still swathed in bandages.

She had removed his breakfast things, and he had called her back to the room. With his old strength slowly beating back through his body, Gordon Stuart would not be denied his wish that she linger and talk to him.

She returned to the room and sat in a chair near the bed.

"You look so well this morning, monsieur, that I shall talk to you a verree little so you will not be cross."

"You treat me like a child, mademoiselle," he protested. "For a week I've been able to talk all day, and yet you barely say good morning to me."

The laughter faded from her eyes.

"Ah, monsieur, but you do not know how ill you have been with that terrible wound; for so long a time you were delirious."

"Did I happen to mention, by any chance, the name of a dear friend of mine, Mademoiselle Lecroix?"

It was Stuart's turn to smile now, for he knew he had called to her, made love to her, laid bare to her the hunger of his heart all through those days of fever.

Her face was aflame but her eyes bravely laughed into his as she parried:

"Monsieur, a nurse should betray no secrets."

Then he said gravely: "Mademoiselle, I have not had the opportunity to tell you how grateful I am—how I owe my life to your coming here. You have not allowed me to say more than thank you, but I want you to know now. It is you who worked the miracle. They have told me all."

"Please, do not speak of it," she protested. "Did you not come to the French companee, to strangers, and give back to me my father's life? And our thanks—how were they shown to you who had done thees thing? A servant of the French companee lies in hiding to give you your death. Oh, what a treachery—a gratitude!"

Gordon Stuart straightened on his pillow. Propped on his uninjured arm, he strained toward her a white and questioning face:

"Was it to pay this debt you felt you owed—was that the sole reason why you came here—to pay a debt?"

Checking a low sob with a quick catch of the breath, she turned her face to the window.

Then the yearning eyes of the wounded man lighted with a great joy as she stood over him, sank slowly to her knees and hid her flaming face in the coverlet.

Reverently Stuart reached out a trembling hand and touched the tumbled masses of her hair. She lifted a face illumined, transfigured, and crushed her lips against his.

Hortense Lecroix had given the factor of Mamatawan his answer.

CONFLICT

(Continued from
page 84)

she raised her value in her companion's estimation.

Two hundred yards farther was the permanent camp below the sluice from Grindstone Pond, a damp structure of peeled logs with staggering porch in front upon which the cookee kept piled his day's supply of stove-wood. A man, unshaven, and wearing a woolen shirt of inch-wide gray and blue plaid, and whose heavy wool trousers were cut off raggedly six inches above his ankles, stood before the door scowling.

"Boss," said Dorcas' companion succinctly.

He stared at her, still scowling; nor did he change his position as she approached, but he bellowed at her companion:

"Well, where is he? Find him?"

"Tell him. Tell him," whispered Dorcas. "I—can't."

"They got him," said Dorcas' companion with a succinctness which must have been characteristic of him. "Jaws of the Rips. Threw him in, I calculate."

The boss remained motionless except that he thrust his head forward so that his neck seemed to sink into his shoulders.

"Five of 'em jumped him. They're walkin' the river now, a-lookin' fer him."

The boss allowed his eyes to shift to

Dorcas' face. "And who be you?" he demanded.

"I," said Dorcas, "was to have been his wife."

"It was you coaxed him away. It was you he gallivanted off to see, despite warnin's." The voice was savage, accusing.

"It was I," she said dully.

"Call in the men," said the boss. "Call 'em all."

"To do what?" said Dorcas.

He glared at her an instant before replying. "To go over there," he said grimly, waving his hand toward Big Sluice Lake.

"No," said Dorcas.

"Call the men," repeated the boss.

"I forbid," said Dorcas.

"Forbid! Who be you to forbid? I'm boss here now that he's—gone. I'm boss, and by God—"

"No," said Dorcas in a dull, toneless voice, "I'm boss. I promised him. I was afraid. I begged him to stay. When he refused, I promised—promised that if harm came to him, I would take the drive down—and see his plans finished. That meant everything to him. The Mountain. You know." She hesitated. "First we must get the logs down—then—oh, then we can do what we must. I won't hold you back then." Her voice lifted; her eyes blazed. "Then you can kill—

and kill—and kill! And I'll love you for it. You're Ovid Soule. I know you. He trusted you."

"Him and me," said Ovid, "was friends."

"Then, Ovid, do as he would order, and let the other wait."

Ovid stared at her, wagged his head. "You and him was goin' to marry. Goin' to marry," he said; and Dorcas became aware that this was the first time it had been put into words, since she had given her love to Jevons. She had announced the fact to Ovid a moment before; he accepted the announcement now. Neither she nor Jevons had arrived at thoughts of marriage. Love had demanded all their minds and their hearts—nothing but love. But so it would have been; she would have been his wife, and Jevons would have been her husband!

"Yes," she said. "Yes. I know all his plans, all his hopes. What he wanted must be done. *It shall be done.*"

"You know what he calculated to do? How he planned to git out of this mess?"

"I know." She approached a step nearer. "You won't interfere! You won't go against his wishes!"

Ovid Soule hesitated an instant, stared into the glowing fire of her eyes, and clenched and unclenched his great, knotty hands. "By the Lord," he bellowed, "what you say goes!"

"Work! Work! Work! . . . Don't let me stop to think—or I will die," she said in the level, unmusical voice that had become hers. "Is there a gang on the lake? Where are those logs?"

"Boomed and ready—waitin' for his word. The gang's waitin'."

"Come," she said.

Side by side they crossed the dam. "Take me to the lake," she directed.

THEY followed the course of the old spillway. It was not difficult to find, with its water-eaten banks of granite. A scant quarter of a mile it was to the larger sheet of water, and there, as she knew, they came upon a great heap of tops and slashings.

"Get men. Clear this away."

He did not understand, but the cold force which emanated from her compelled him to her bidding. A dozen men tore at the heap of dead boughs, throwing them to one side and the other until dam and sluice were uncovered.

"By golly!" exclaimed Ovid. "This is what he done las' fall. Boys, the boss is gone. They got him las' night when he was a-comin' back to camp. I know who done it. I know. 'Twas that man Sloane. . . . This here is her he was a-goin' to marry. She's boss in his place."

The men gathered in a sullen, muttering knot. They had worked with Jevons in France, in that camp hard by Dijon; they had come from the four quarters of the country in answer to his summons—because they loved him. They were fighting men, hard men, lawless men.

They muttered and scowled and uttered curses under their breath. Dorcas read sure meaning into their mutterings.

"Men," she said, "not now! That must wait. First we must get the logs down—those are his orders. He—he loved you all. When this work is done—when *his* work is done, then—oh, go, go! I'll not stop you. I'll go with you. But not now—for his sake, not now."

They hesitated, muttered sullenly, but she compelled them.

"If Remalie's gang finds this here sluice—" said Ovid.

"Guard it. Get dynamite, guns, anything."

"We may run ag'in' the law, takin' this water."

"Law!" she said. "Get the booms into this cove. Tomorrow we commence to sluice."

ALL that day, with favorable wind, gangs toiled at the headworks, kedging the great boom of logs from its anchorage across the lake. Within earshot John Remalie's men, laboring at their own headworks, jeered and giped, making open boast of how they would hang Jevons' drive. Dorcas paced back and forth on the dam, or embarked in a bateau manned by skilled oarsmen to go out upon the lake and to urge the men to more killing efforts. "Work, work, work," was always on her lips; and the men, awed by the force which grief had loosed within her, stared and whispered and obeyed.

"When they see this here boom a-movin' into the cove," said Ovid, "they're a-goin' to wonder why—and they're a-goin' to try to find out."

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Dorcas nodded. "So much the better! If they come, it will—give the men a chance. They'll work better for it."

Ovid stared at her. Here was no woman's understanding, but the understanding of a man, hard, reckless of consequences. It was unnatural, disturbing even to him who was not given to a consideration of the souls of his fellow-creatures. It awed him, caused him concern. "She's kind of beside herself," he told himself.

"Post men—with dynamite—a hundred yards along the shore in each direction," she said. "Tell them not to hesitate—not to hold back."

"Dynamite means killin'—fists and cant-dog handles means only bangin' and bruising," he said.

She glanced at him, and in her eyes was almost a sneer. Ovid walked away shaking his head.

The boom swung inward toward the cove, and presently it could be seen that curious eyes watched the maneuver. A bateau from the other side of the lake swept across, a man standing erect in the bows to determine what the peculiar movement of the boom betokened.

"Drive that boat back," said Dorcas grimly.

MEN sprang eagerly into a bateau and raced out to meet the approaching enemy—the first action of the war, a miniature encounter between navies. Dorcas watched with strange lack of emotion as men went forth to fight under her orders. She watched her little boat, graceful, with high-pointed bow and stern, head straight for the enemy craft with intent to ram. Water foamed under its bows as the rage in the arms of its oarsmen gave it speed. The other bateau slackened watchfully, veered in time to save itself from being cut in two. The boats crashed, quarter against quarter, careened, righted, clung together while furious men belabored each other with oar and cant-dog handle. A descending oar hurled the leader of the enemy into the lake, where he floundered and splashed blindly; another man dropped on the thwarts, his head hanging overside into the water.

The bateaux rocked perilously under the exertions of their crews, drifted apart. Dorcas saw the crippled crew of the enemy snatching oars, defeated, striving to flee; but her men pursued them vindictively. Presently one man of seven remained upright, and he, losing courage, plunged overboard, preferring the icy lake to the fury of the attack. Dorcas' men shouted hoarsely and turned their boat shoreward.

Ovid watched Dorcas, saw how she stood tense, unemotional, save for an unpleasant glitter of the eye. Her face was set, cold, lovely as frost at lowest temperatures is lovely. She seemed impersonal, incapable of human passions, above human emotions. That mere men were battered, injured, drowned perhaps, did not move her, except with a sort of icy pleasure. Every blow smitten was a blow for Jevons. That satisfied her, contented her.

"Now they'll know somethin's up—for sure," said Ovid.

"Let them," answered Dorcas.

IT was late afternoon before the boom was secured in the cove. During the interval a gang of men with teams had been working in the ancient bed of the stream, clearing it, making it ready as best they could. But time urged.

"Open the gate," Dorcas directed. "Let the water sweep it clean."

The gate was lifted, and the torrent gushed and swirled, heading its way between the granite banks with a hungry eagerness; wrenching, tearing, thrusting. It burst upon the little pond in a giant ripple, forcing back the quiet waters, lifting and rolling the imprisoned logs which waited for its force and volume to carry them down Taradiddle Brook.

"Close the gate," said Dorcas. "We commence to sluice at dawn. Have the men in their places."

"Better keep a dozen on the dam," advised Ovid.

"Keep twenty," said Dorcas. "Fetch blankets and pitch a tent. I stay here."

At dusk the three Ginger brothers came, heavy of foot, weary, woeeful.

"Where is she?" asked Hannibal.

"Yonder, in a tent."

"How's she bearin' up?"

Ovid shook his head. "Taint nateral. Taint human. The's uthin' about her that chills my marrows."

"Soule," said Fabius, "we didn't find hide nor hair of him."

Ovid scowled. "Seems like he'd be throwed out."

"If he was throwed in," said Hannibal. "From her tell, he was throwed in."

"Looked so. Everythin' p'inted to it. But he haint there."

"Might 'a' ketched on the bottom some're."

"Not with that head of water—don't seem as though."

"Then what d'ye think?"

"I dunno. But don't tell her nothin'. Don't lift up no hopes."

"I have no hopes to be lifted," said Dorcas from the shadows beyond the fitful, tossing light of the fire. "I have—nothing."

"Pore leetle gal! Pore leetle gal!" said old Hannibal softly.

"Not now," said Dorcas. "No sympathy now. I can't bear it. If I could only sleep!"

"Anyhow, you got to eat," said Ovid.

"Sometime—sometime. Not now." She turned, to walk slowly back to her tent. The four men looked into each other's eyes and breathed deeply. All had seen suffering; all were men of the forest, hard, accustomed to the grimness of life; but never had they witnessed what they saw in Dorcas. It was incomprehensible to them; it frightened them.

"What d'ye s'pose—" said Hasdrubal. "God knows," answered Fabius. "She'll break. She's got to break. I'm afeared it's killin' her on her feet."

"She blames herself," said Hannibal. "It's easy seen. Wisht the' was a woman with her. Wisht Letty Piggott was sharin' it with her."

Dorcas lay upon her blankets, her eyes staring dully upward at the canvas above her. Always, always she was fighting back that horror-eyed thing that lurked in the crannies of her brain, that despair which mouthed and eyed her with hungry covetousness. She must hold it back. She

must not think, must not allow her thoughts to go to Jevons. Not now, not until his work was done!

At midnight there was a sound of shouting, of clumsy running through the underbrush. A man had come to spy, had seen and escaped with the knowledge he gained. Dorcas did not stir; the incident scarcely aroused her, though its significance impressed itself upon her.

"Tomorrow," she said to herself, "they'll try to destroy the sluice."

CHAPTER XXVII

ALL his life John Remalie had been on the offensive; he understood a warfare of invasion and pillage; he knew how to strike suddenly and ruthlessly. But now, for months, he seemed to have been forced more and more to recede from his position as an invading conqueror, and to look to the protection of his power and his possessions.

Jevons had dared to invade his domain; Jevons had outflanked him and had inflicted his first defeat when the young man secured an option to the Sugar Loaf Mountain tract. It shook Remalie more than the old lumberman realized in his attempts at self-analysis. It was the first inch of dry land disclosed by the recession of the tide of his fortune.

From the first he attempted to fight offense with offense. His success was negligible. Jevons held his own everywhere, until Remalie, in desperation, fell back upon the primitive final resource, popular in older and darker ages. Now, as he sat at his desk, he knew his antagonist was no longer to be feared. Word had reached him from the woods that Jevons was not to be found in the woods, nor was likely again to be found there.

The word had come to him the night before, bare, without details. "Jevons is gone," was the message. How he had gone, by whose hand, Remalie did not know; but somehow he burned to know. He desired details—yet if details had been offered him, he would have thrust them away horrified. Even now he could pretend to himself, without convincing himself. He could assert to his own soul that he had not procured the act nor authorized it. And to the world, he would defend himself against accusation with every means within his power. He was forced, at last, to consider defense.

He could not avoid paying the divine penalty for his mortal sin, but he could and would avoid paying the penalty exacted by the laws of man, and to avoid it he would sacrifice any whose sacrifice would be available. There was no loyalty in him. Those who carried out his will were negligible; he would give them up without a thought—would, if need be, denounce and bring them to justice himself. It was of that he was thinking now—of the advisability of taking the first step, of demanding justice, of setting in motion the machinery of the law against Mark Sloane. What he pondered was the method of it, how it could be done without ill consequences to himself.

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something sinister had befallen Jevons, was discussing it in grocery, hotel, drug-store, on street-corners. It was discussing it with comprehension and with conviction. Already it had held trial, and John Remalie was convicted. In the mind of no single inhabitant was there a doubt that John Remalie had procured the taking off of Jevons; the verdict was unanimous and on the first ballot.

FABIUS GINGER brought the news. "Piled onto him nigh the Jaws of the Rips—five of 'em. Him goin' back to camp from his girl! Five of 'em! No, haint found his body. Curious, what with the flood-water an' all. But signs all p'inted to throwin' him into the river."

He had come to town for two purposes, the first of which was to consult Letty Figgott. She listened with grimness to his tale, not interrupting. "So I come," he said, "to see if mebbly you wouldn't ride back with me and stay by her. Needs a woman, seems as though."

"What about John Remalie?" Letty said, her dry voice harsh and forbidding. "John Remalie," said Fabius soberly, "has come to the end of his string. It haint so much the young feller—though that was bad—it's *her*. It's what he's done to her."

"She's quiet, not grieving?" said Letty. "Cold. Kind of savage and determined."

Letty nodded. "Thinks she's taking his place—finishing his work."

"Haint sure but what she is."

"She's best let be," said Letty. "While she keeps up—while it lasts. I'd only weaken her. No, Fabius, it's best I shouldn't come. But when she's through—when the time comes, fetch her to me."

He turned away, but she halted him. "Fabius Ginger, are you afraid of John Remalie?"

He paused and peered at her in ponderous manner. "Afeard? Don't calculate to be. Why?"

"I was wondering if there was a man hereabouts who wasn't afraid of him," she said. "If you are, Fabius Ginger, if you show the white feather now, why, you needn't to come here again. I wont want to see you, Fabius Ginger."

"Letty," he said humbly, "I haint took a chaw of tobacco in more'n five months. Not one!"

"It's not tobacco that's worrying me now, Fabius; it's courage. And I'll be waiting to see."

Fabius walked down the steps of the library and made his way to Orrin Lakin's hotel, where he repeated his news to Orr'n and the loungers in the office. From there it spread and eddied and swirled into every corner of the village, taking on added details as it flew. But however much of apocryphal authority was added, one fact remained sharp, distinct, positive: John Remalie was guilty!

UNAWARE of all this, John Remalie left his office at the accustomed eleven o'clock to walk to his home. As he approached the hotel, he became aware of an unusual number of loungers

clustered on the piazza—but no sooner than the loungers became aware of his approach. Conversation ceased. Every head, every eye, turned to stare at him, and he felt the acute discomfort, the unease of being the focus of hostile human eyes. He increased his pace, would have passed in his habitual stiff, spuriously dignified way, but Fabius Ginger stepped from the crowd, his great bulk barring the sidewalk. Remalie would have turned out to pass, but Fabius' huge paw fell upon his shoulder to detain him.

"John Remalie," said he, "I got a word to say to you."

"Then come to my office—in an hour," Remalie said in his old domineering manner.

"Now—where folks kin hear," said Fabius. "John Remalie, I jest come from the woods, fetchin' news. The's been a killin', Remalie. A young man's dead, and a girl's heart is broke. Know anythin' about it, Remalie?"

"How should I know anything of it?" Remalie scowled. "Get out of my way."

"The name was Jevons—the man that's killed, and his body thrown in the river," said Fabius.

"Jevons—dead!" Remalie had his back to the wall now; he would fight. He was able to fight. Oily hypocrisy masked him, dripped from him. "The poor young man! Struck down in the flower of his youth! How did the frightful accident happen?"

"It's what I want you should tell, John Remalie."

"How should I tell, my friend? But think of it! So young and strong! The ways of God are past human understanding. I'm shocked, grieved. Let me pass, my friend. Let us hope he had a moment in which to repent. Ah, I shall pray for the repose of the young man's soul."

"YOU haint got it straight, Remalie."

It's the ways of man that's past God's understandin'. John Remalie, here with these citizens a-listenin', I want to tell you that you're a liar and a hypocrite. Don't gig back onto your heels, man. There's more. You're a murderer, Remalie. Them's my words, and I stand by 'em before God and man. It was you killed Jevons, Remalie. It was you gave the orders and paid for the work. And by gorry, Remalie, you're goin' to pay for it—pay for the killin' of that boy and the breakin' of that girl's heart! —Be you a-listenin', all? I'm standin' here sayin' John Remalie's the murderer of young Jevons. Hear me?"

"Man, you're crazy," said Remalie, black with fear in his heart, but standing under the protection of guile and subtlety. "Why should I kill a boy? What says the Good Book of false accusers? But wait. He was killed? It was no accident?"

"It was a willful killin', as you know best."

"Then," said Remalie, "I know the guilty man. He shall be brought to justice—I shall make it my business to bring him to justice, for it will be in the Lord's service. I know the man. I have heard him threaten Jevons. I have been aware of his hatred for Jevons."

It is frightful—an employee of mine! Why did I not warn the poor young man! Yet I had no thought of such incredible malice and wickedness. Men, you shall not find me backward in this thing. I shall not attempt to shield the guilty, but shall give every aid to the lawful authorities. Friends, the hands stained with innocent blood are the hands of Mark Sloane."

"And the voice that give the orders was the voice of John Remalie," said Fabius.

The meeting, the public denunciation, were unreal, like some horrid nightmare, to John Remalie. He had defended himself automatically, using such means as came first to hand, not lacking a species of courage. He had committed himself. Now, with that moment behind him, he walked hurriedly to the shelter of his home, and as he walked, his cunning brain planned and schemed.

Once in the little office off his library, he lifted the telephone from the hook and called the home of the resident deputy sheriff.

"Come to my house at once," he ordered, "at once. A murder has been committed."

The deputy came hastily and stood before the man who was supreme in that principality.

"Tom," said Remalie, "a frightful thing has happened. Young Jevons has been killed. In the midst of life, we are in death, Tom. How little he dreamed of his sudden taking-off! I trust he had come to an understanding with God, Tom. But—it is the duty of man to punish—a duty delegated by Heaven. The guilty must be made to suffer on earth as well as in the hereafter. Do you realize, Tom, that you, as an officer of justice, are a servant of God? Communicate with your superiors at once. Take a posse and place under arrest Mark Sloane. Suspicion points to him, suspicion that amounts to certainty."

"Um—hear the body was thrown in the river?"

"So I've been told."

"Haint been found yit?"

"I believe not."

"Dunno's I kin act, then. Dunno's any murder's been done. Oh, I calc'late, havin' been depty these thutteen year, to know the law. Got to have a *corpus delictus*, or whatever they call it. Yes sirc. You can't have no murderer till you git you a murder—like you might put it. That there's the law."

"You can arrest on suspicion, my man. And I want this Mark Sloane arrested—at once. Understand! I want no nonsense. Get the sheriff on the wire, and tell him those are my orders."

"Um! If you say so, Mr. Remalie, I calc'late the chief kin manage it, *corpus delictum* or no *corpus*. What's a *corpus* or two amongst political friends, anyhow?" said Tom with a bovine wink.

"That's all, my man. Let me know immediately when the man is in jail. And Tom, tell the sheriff he is to be allowed to speak to nobody—nobody."

THE door into the hall closed after the deputy, and Remalie bowed his head on his hands and closed his eyes, not in divine supplication, but to think.

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By Richard W. Samson

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So it came about that J. F. James studied while other men wasted their time shooting pool or playing pinochle or watching the clock. They are still doing it today—worn, discouraged men who cry out that "they never had a chance."

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He must think, he must plan surely and cunningly; if he could not hoodwink the all-seeing eye of God, he must, at least, deceive the blindfolded eyes of Justice!

As he sat, he did not hear the door from the dining-room open, did not see Miss Labo step inside, very still, bright of eye, unemotional of face. She spoke to him for the second time in thirty years!

"John Remalie," she said in her crackling, dead voice, "I heard."

He started, whirled to face her.

"Creeping, crawling, spying," he snarled venomously.

"You tell that man to arrest Mark Sloane?"

"You heard—"

"For murder?"

"Because he's a murderer."

"They hang for murder," she said, not to Remalie but to herself. "With a rope, they hang for murder."

"He'll hang," said Remalie. "What business is it of yours?"

"My business! Yes, my business. Your business too, John Remalie. Now I tell you, because he must not hang. I will not have him hang. So I tell you."

"Tell me what, woman?"

She hesitated even now, but there was no other way.

"He is that boy," said Miss Labo.

"That boy? What boy?"

"The son of you and me—twenty-eight, twenty-nine years ago."

"God!" Remalie gasped; and in that moment it seemed as if the flood-tide had receded until the whole floor of the ocean lay horrid, bare, unsightly.

Miss Labo turned with spectral movement and glided out of the room.

The conclusion of this remarkable novel by the author of "The High-flyers" and "A Daughter of Discontent" will appear in the forthcoming October issue.

TOUCHING PITCH

(Continued from page 65)

for the impulse upon which he now acted. Why should he, of all people, move to vindicate the rightful hero of the rescue which he had witnessed?

"Excuse me!" They looked round like one man. He was silent long enough for them to get the quality of him; one learns these tricks in business. "I have happened to overhear the last part of your conversation. Do I understand you to inform these gentlemen that you are Mr. C. Skinner, who rescued a child fallen overboard from the *Minnehaha* in August last?"

The sporting men stared. The youth goggled owlishly.

"Wha'—wha's that got to do with you?" he demanded at last.

"It has this much to do," replied Sir John. "I heard the statement made, and I heard you corroborate it. I witnessed that accident and the rescue; and you were not there."

The half-drunk youth gazed vacantly. "Ol' man says I'm not Clem Skinner!" he observed in a stagnation of amaze.

"Look here!" The man with the rasping voice was recovering. "I don't know who you are—"

"I'll tell you," interrupted Sir John crisply. "I am Sir John Wotton; and this man"—he pointed with an inexorable forefinger—"is an impostor! You had better be careful how you support him in his tale. The police are—"

"Hush, for the Lord's sake!" besought the harsh-voiced man. The door from the hall was opening. "Here's some one comin'."

"Anyone may come," insisted Sir John. "As I was saying—"

The door opened and let the new arrival through.

"Here's the nurse!" said the harsh-voiced man with a spurt of uneasy laughter.

BUT Sir John did not hear him. He was staring with an almost ghastly astonishment at the man who entered, stood for a moment within the threshold

looking around and then strode forward toward the group. For here at last was the authentic young man from the *Minnehaha*, the man who had snubbed him so outrageously in the New York hotel—the pitch that he had touched and that would not be washed off.

As he advanced, he had a manner of seeing none of them save the sodden young liar lounging in his chair. He touched the drunken youth on the shoulder.

"Come on, Clem," he said. "We'll get out of this now."

"Not me!" protested Clem. "I don't wanna Turkish bath. Look here, Charley; there's ol' guy says I'm not Clem Skinner. Ol' guy there! Wha's he mean, eh? Wha's he mean?"

He pointed waveringly; his sleek friends were watching expectantly. The young man looked round impatiently at Sir John. A brief sound like a wordless oath escaped him.

"You—again!" he exclaimed. "Are you—are you following me round, or what?"

Sir John gathered himself together. "I don't know what's going on here," he declared, "but it's something crooked. That man says he was the rescuer of the child who fell overboard from the *Minnehaha* and that his name is C. Skinner."

"Well?" demanded the other.

"And I say he is no such thing," cried Sir John. "Confound it, sir! Didn't I see you go overboard after that child myself? Didn't I see you and the child brought aboard? Didn't I meet you afterward in New York? D'ye take me for a fool? Perhaps you'll deny that you were a passenger in the ship at all?"

The other appeared unmoved.

"Perhaps," he answered imperturbably to Sir John's last question. "As a matter of fact, these gentlemen can testify that I didn't leave London between July of last year and January of this. And this"—he laid his hand on the young drunkard's shoulders—"is Clement Skinner."

"H'm!" Sir John, with his wits about him, surveyed him carefully. "I see it's no use talking to you," he said. "Story agreed upon, witnesses prepared and—apparently—alibis for two of you! Well, whatever you're planning, I'm going to spoil it for you. I shall put Scotland Yard on its guard as fast as my car can take me there!"

"Hey, look here!" It was the saw-mill voice raised in expostulation. Sir John ignored it. Severe and purposeful, he stalked to the door and forth from the room. He passed to the entrance and beckoned his car.

The commissioner opened the door of it for him, and he was in the act of stepping in when a voice spoke beside him.

"I'll come too, if you like," it said.

It was the tall young man of the *Minnehaha*. He too had obtained his hat and cane and now stood, darkling and imperturbable as ever, awaiting Sir John's reply.

"You!" said Sir John. "All right; come on, then!"

They took seats side by side in the big limousine and were borne away into the traffic of the Strand on their way to the Embankment and Scotland Yard.

FOR a couple of minutes neither spoke. Then Sir John, in an outburst that would not be controlled: "I'm not going to stand this damn mystification, you know!"

The other nodded slowly. "You'd like an explanation?"

"You'll have to be pretty good at explaining," said Sir John.

"No," said the younger man. "I won't. But you'd have to be pretty good at understanding. I've not seen any signs of that yet. However—Scotland Yard, if you like. If you can stand looking like a fool, I can stand seeing you do it."

Sir John turned to regard him. "Is there time for your explanation?" he demanded.

"No," agreed the other. "I'm not good at telling things. It would take longer than we'll need to get to Scotland Yard. Still—if we could go round by some longer way, it would save a lot of pain and sorrow to—people who don't deserve it!"

For answer Sir John picked up the speaking-tube to the chauffeur, and the big car changed its course. Thus it came about that the tale was told within the luxurious box of the limousine, while they moved about the drive in Hyde Park, seated hip to haunch so that neither could gaze into the other's face.

It proved that the young man was right; he was "not good at telling things." He had as little of the art of narrative as ever was bestowed upon a sane and articulate human being. But he began well.

"That was Clem Skinner," he said. And after a longish pause: "He's got a sister!"

"Ah!" said Sir John.

"He's got a sister!" She was, it appeared, a girl of twenty-four, an invalid, spending painful days looking upon the sea from a couch on the veranda of a villa at Antibes, on the French Riviera.



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living from dawn to dawn by virtue of the ministry of her doctors. Dark or fair, tall or little—that was not mentioned; only in the tone of the narrator a change of note that showed like a glow through the level of his voice, conveyed to the listener a sense that for the speaker there was bound up in her the glory of life, the hope of heaven.

"And he, Clem, he's all she's got—except me; and she's crazy over him. He's—well, he's a bit liable to hit it up; you noticed how he was, I expect; and Monte Carlo was a lot too near to Antibes to give him a chance. So it came to be sort of understood, without anything said, between her and me, that I'd do my best to look out for him and generally do the guardian-angel, elder-brother business around him. You see, if he did a murder, she'd still be crazy over him."

THE guardian-angel and the elder-brother had not availed to ballast the youth spoken of as Clem. He would go to his sister's bedside yet quaking from a debauch, and she would rebuke him lovingly and jestingly, as one reproves a too enterprising child. "His mother was like that," said the speaker.

And all the while, he, her lover and willing servant, watched her melt, as it were, under his eyes, saw the mere bodily substance of her fade and diminish and her life visibly ebb. Then the doctor's verdict: there must be found some one who would submit to a transfusion of blood from full veins to her starved ones. There must be found some one—as though that some one were not at hand, as though every drop of blood in all his hard and healthy body were not hers without the asking.

And naturally it was Clem, her loved brother, who came forward and was chosen to make the gift.

"Clem, darling," she had said. "Oh, I couldn't let you, but Dr. Vaucher says it's so utterly safe—and without it, Clem, we'd have to part. Clem, darling, all my life I'll love you for it!"

He had watched them together, Clem with his head bowed to the pillow, she with her thin arm about his neck. The transfusion was for the following day; and that evening Clem had motored into Monte Carlo, and been motored back the following morning, unconscious, his blood-vessels foul with alcohol.

But—one heard in his voice that here he could have blessed the drunkard—she got the clean strong blood after all. They blindfolded her; she was accustomed, as invalids are, to acquiesce passively in all that a doctor dictates; and for an hour he lay beside her and knew that the beating of his heart was feeding and restoring hers.

"LADIES' WAYS"

BOOTH TARKINGTON will contribute "Ladies' Ways," a delightful story of youth, to our next issue. It will give you a happy hour.

"An' I took that Clem by the scruff of his soul and made him act it out. She wanted a brother that had saved her, an' what she wants I'm goin' to see that she gets. Grateful to him? I'll tell the world she was grateful. Grateful an' happy!"

She had rallied after that; the rich life-stuff had saved her. And later it had been needful that Clem should go to New York upon a piece of family business. She had begged her lover to go with him. "I know—now—that he's all right," she said. "But I can so trust you, Charley; you're such an elderly old thing; and it would make me happier." Which settled it of course, and he and Clem had departed for London and booked a two-berth cabin aboard the *Minnehaha*, sailing a week later.

Clem had been difficult in London. He had a way of gambling as monkeys have of scratching; he drank almost as automatically as he breathed. He was as difficult to keep a steady eye on as the lively flea; and during their sojourn in London he had broken away from his companion.

"Gambling-joint, it was, in one o' those flats in the West End. He knew where to find it, all right. Lot o' jolly men—all majors and captains, you know; bunch of women who know the Duke of Hell and the dear old Earl of Blazes; and then the fools, the come-ons. An' there they were, Clem drunk, of course—and the money and the cards lying about, when in came the police. An' Clem—I told you was drunk—pulls his gun an' shoots."

NOBODY had been hit; it was not as bad as that. The promoters of the game had been heavily fined; the magistrate had showered penalties left and right, but Clem had been sent for trial. "Six months, he got—six months hard labor! An' that poor girl at Antibes—"

"How did she take it?" asked Sir John.

"She never knew," answered the other. "Clem gave a false name; he was sentenced under it. And I went on alone to New York. And since that affair o' the kid on the *Minnehaha*—well, I've made Clem act that out too. He's a real hero now. So you see why I couldn't let you go to Scotland Yard."

They were near Hyde Park Corner, and he tapped on the glass for the chauffeur to stop. The car drew to a standstill; he opened the door. Sir John drew a deep breath.

"I don't know what to say," he said. "It's—it's all very queer. That girl—that young lady—she's bound to find out some day. A false name—"

The other, one foot on the step, shook his head.

"Who's to tell her?" he asked. "Anyhow," said Sir John, "it's a pity she can't know what she owes you. I'd advise, if you'll permit me, that when next you see her—"

"No," said the younger man. "There isn't going to be a next time. You see, Clem had to give some name when they took him. So he gave mine."

He nodded, and straightening that stiff back of his, he turned and walked away toward the Park Gates.

MOONLIGHT

(Continued from page 46)

stock-market, I believe," said the Hunter woman. "I wish somebody would do that for me."

"That's it. He's showing her how to invest all she made last night," said Billie Bannerman, referring to the money John Schmaar had let the Dulcifer girl take out of the game that night before, just to make her feel good-natured.

And now the girl herself spoke up from behind Schmaar.

"It's a good deal worse than that," she declared. Her voice, he noticed, was high and sharp; and she laughed a high, unnatural laugh.

"She's going on with it," he said to himself. "She's going to force me!"

"Worse!" the other two exclaimed after her—themselves probably noticing the tone of her voice.

SCHMAAR'S feelings were changing pretty rapidly now. He had expected to laugh her out of it; but he was growing a little weary of humoring her—less playful by quite a lot than he had been. "All right," he said to himself. "If she's got to have it, let her!" And he stood watching her, with his motionless face and still gray eyes.

"I wouldn't have believed it!" she was going on to the others.

"What?"

"I've just offered him a bet he won't take," she informed them. "Too big for him! He's reneged."

John Schmaar saw now, of course, her game.

"I wouldn't have believed that," said the Hunter girl.

"I don't believe it now," said Billie Bannerman.

The two of them approached Schmaar and the Dulcifer girl at one end of the big table in the center of the room under the huge glass chandelier. Schmaar's sister, with her perpetual set smile, sat down on the lounge facing the fireplace.

"Wait a minute," said Schmaar. He went over to the wall and switched on the light in the big chandelier. The room, the pictures on the wall, and the statues in the corners—which once had decorated Schmaar's gambling-house—sprang out in the full light. It was a superb room.

"Now, then," he said, coming back, "we can see what we are talking about." He realized the game she was playing, that she was going to go for him on that reputation of his, that everybody knew, of never refusing to take a fair bet with anybody.

"Was it a fair bet?" the Hunter girl asked Aileen Dulcifer.

"Absolutely," she answered. "Ask him if it wasn't."

Schmaar's eyes didn't change, but his face grew just a trifle red. He felt the blood come up into his head, the way it did sometimes lately when he let himself go a little—making him a bit dizzy. But one would scarcely have noticed this in his face.

"Fair, yes!" he said, looking at her



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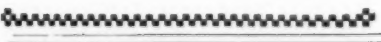
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"Especially a woman!" the Hunter girl amplified.

"This was a fair, equal bet against a woman," the Dulcifer girl asserted. "Wasn't it?" she asked Schmaar.

"It was—yes," Schmaar answered, his mind about made up now. He'd be likely to stand here taking that kind of stuff—from a pack of women!

"A good woman is the bravest thing in the world, huh?" said John Schmaar to himself. "She'll go the limit—when she cares," he thought, recalling the talk of yesterday. "All right, we'll take you up to the limit and let you have a look at it."

So now he "called" her.

"Tell them why it was," he said.

"Why *what* was?"

"Why it was I wouldn't do it. What I was afraid of—the only thing!"

"That I can't tell—not being you!" she said with that same bitter, sneering tone in her voice. But her face changed a little too.

"About who would welch—who would be sure to?" Schmaar said.

That stirred her up again as he thought it would.

"Not I!" she came back at once. "You know that. I wouldn't welch. I *couldn't* welch—if I lost. I'd rather die a thousand times!"

"Die a thousand times!" cried the Bannerman girl, catching it up. "Some excitement! But what's it all about?"

"It's something we can't talk about," Aileen told them, dodging. "Or it couldn't happen."

"And he won't do it?" inquired the Bannerman girl, keeping the game interesting.

"No," said Aileen Dulcifer. "I wouldn't have believed it myself. I thought he would take *any* bet. I thought that was his reputation—the one he had built up."

She was laughing again now, but a light, hard laugh that was not very pleasant to John Schmaar.

"You're cooking it up for yourself good!" thought Schmaar—watching her under his eyelids, waiting for his time.

"If it had been anybody else," the Dulcifer girl kept on—looking at him, her voice a little bit shriller and louder even under her laughter. "If it hadn't been John Schmaar, I'd have said he was just plain afraid—in fact, almost a cow—"

"So you've got to have it!" said Schmaar's voice, breaking in before she had finished.

And they were all still—when they heard the tone of it. He could see the Dulcifer girl's face change—looking actually pleased, thinking she had "got" him finally. And she had too, in a way.

"And you think you can go through, if you lose," he went on in his deadliest, quietest voice.

"I'll go as far as you will!" she said, staring back without a quiver. He could see she thought she would, too.

"All right!" said Schmaar. "Let's go!"

She was all ready for her lesson.

"Now we understand each other," he said. "If this goes, it means the whole thing."

"It certainly does—for me," she said, her eyes still hard and shiny. "It has to!"

"All right," he said. "I guess you can count on me. A number of people have. I guess my past reputation is good for it, if yours is!"

"I'll stick," she told him. "Don't worry about me."

"All right," he said, going on. He saw her almost crying now—she was so serious. "Now, then," he said, letting her eyes go finally, and turning around to the other two, "you know my motto."

"What?"

"If they lay themselves open to be shot, shoot them!"

Oh, yes, they remembered.

"You saw," Schmaar told them, "I warned her! This was nothing of my cooking up, was it?" he asked, now turning suddenly to Aileen again.

"No," she said, her eyes not dropping.

"All right," said Schmaar to her. "Go ahead. Plan the obsequies. It's your funeral!"

IT was, too. If she thought she could go on playing at this fool thing to the end, it was up to her. He was some actor himself.

"Now, what is this thing? We've got to know!" Billie Bannerman was insistent. "What is this mystery? Is it as terrible as you two look?"

"Is it so hard to do?" inquired the Hunter girl.

"It's perfectly easy, isn't it," said Aileen Dulcifer, looking at John Schmaar and smiling.

"Anybody can do it!" said Schmaar, smiling back.

And just then Captain Armitage, the automatic hero, came in, and they all had to stop and explain it to him.

"I thought Gladden was coming up with you!" Schmaar said, shaking hands with him.

"He did—over the ferry!" he told him. "But he had to walk the rest of the way for his exercise."

"To get the vile air of New York out of his lungs," said the Dulcifer girl, laughing. You would have thought now she hadn't a care on earth.

They all laughed with her, remembering the way the Westerner had of freeing his mind about New York.

"You'll hear him in a minute," said the Hunter girl, "coming up the road—singing his song for Aileen to go out and meet him."

Usually a remark like that would have set Aileen Dulcifer's face ablaze. But now it made no impression whatever.

"I can't go out tonight," she said. "I haven't time. There's something more important going on right here."

"Yes—come on! Listen!" called the bouncing Bannerman girl to the Captain. "There's something terribly intense going on here."

"Tremendous. A huge mystery!" contributed the Hunter girl, and they told him all about it.

The whole thing, of course, was being turned into a game. It was a great joke.

"But look!" said the Bannerman girl, talking loud. "This will have to be done right, wont it? So there's no hole in it?"

Schmaar nodded, looking at them with a little smile—wondering how Aileen would turn *this* corner.

"Well, now—how can it be—how can it be a bet," asked Billie Bannerman, "if nobody knows what it is? Somebody's got to know what it is. Somebody's got to decide, or it's no bet at all!"

"Ask her—it's her funeral!" said John Schmaar.

And just then he heard outside, the voice of that Westerner, coming up the road, turning into the driveway, starting that stammering song of his, that: "K-k-katy, Beautiful Katy," who was going to meet him in the moonlight—that song which the Hunter girl had just been saying was a call and signal for Aileen.

The Dulcifer girl may have heard him, as she probably did, but if so, she paid no attention. She went on answering the Bannerman girl's suggestion, carrying on the game.

"Oh," she said after a minute, "I've got the idea. Where's an envelope and paper and pencil?"

Schmaar got them for her, wondering just which way her mind would jump next.

"Now, then," said Aileen to the rest, "keep away. I'll write it down."

It was a great game. She laughed as she wrote something down.

"Here," she said, covering the paper with her hand, and passing it to Schmaar, "is that right?"

"The loser," he read, "will take the Lovers' Leap—as agreed!"

The last two words were underscored. They meant something to them—nothing to anybody else—according to her notion!

"That's good," said John Schmaar, with still face looking at her. "That's just right!"

"And we understand?" she asked him with a quick sly look as their eyes met.

"I do," he said, from his still face, "if you do!"

"Don't keep worrying about me!" she said, her face flushing, as it did when he said that. "You needn't! And don't be afraid—ever—that I wont go as far as you will!"

JUST then the Westerner—Gladden—appeared in the doorway, looking surprised and a little peevish. Aileen Dulcifer didn't even notice him—or at least seemed not to.

"Come in," Billie Bannerman said. "But don't interrupt; there's something terribly intense going on here!" And he made him stand beside her as John Schmaar went on talking. He didn't like it much. Schmaar could see that.

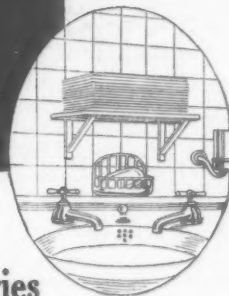
"There's one thing," Schmaar was saying, "that we haven't decided yet—when will this take place?"

"Any time," was the reply.

"Well, let's say forty-eight hours," he said, thinking first probably of that other thing—that duel by lot he had seen long ago, and realizing at the same time that it would give plenty of time—for Aileen to wake up.



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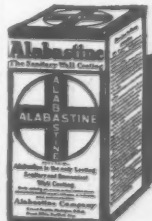


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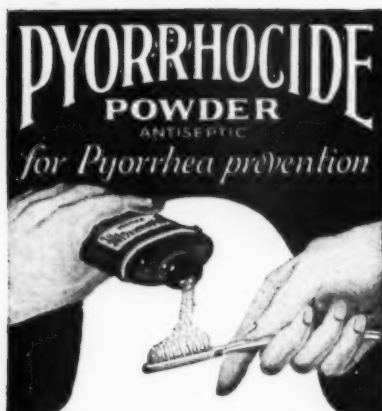
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"And where will it be?" somebody asked.

"Oh, that's settled already," Aileen replied.

"Pretty gay, huh?" he said to her with his expressionless look—and caught that sly gleam in her eyes again. "Just lots and lots of fun!"

John Schmaar had seen them before like that. She showed no signs of waking yet. No. That would come later.

"Come on!" she said, hurrying him now. "Come on. Let's go!"

"What's next?" the Bannerman girl inquired.

"We'll show you," said Schmaar, "in just a minute."

"This first!" cried Aileen Dulcifer, and held up the envelope.

"Oh, yes," said the Hunter girl. And the Dulcifer girl sealed it. She was laughing again.

"Who's to hold it?"

"And when will it be opened?" asked the two other girls, one after the other.

"After forty-eight hours, I suppose," said Schmaar, glancing over at Aileen Dulcifer.

"Yes," she told him.

"And where?"

"Here."

"And who'll hold it?" the Hunter girl asked again.

"I know!" shouted Billie Bannerman.

"Who?"

"A perfectly disinterested party."

"Who's that?"

"Why, Mr. Gladden, of course!"

And all the rest laughed with her, seeing his face as he stood there, watching this foolish performance, and entirely ignorant of what it was all about.

"What is this pleasant party?" he asked, trying to act easy yet scowling at the same time—as he quite often did lately, John Schmaar remembered.

Then they all explained to him all that they knew—breaking in, laughing louder and louder.

"What is this thing?" he asked, smiling,—trying to,—not knowing quite where the joke was, whether they were guying him or not. "What is this thing?" he inquired again, when they handed him the envelope—which they had sealed with sealing wax. "What am I supposed to do?"

"You're the holder of the key to the mystery. You keep the sacred envelope," said the Hunter girl, "and you're not to open it, on your honor—till you are back here, in this room, forty-eight hours from now!"

SCHMAAR looked him over, standing there, looking surprised, apparently—surprised and a little annoyed.

"But there's another thing," Billie Bannerman broke in, "that I won't stand for. He's not to come back here, either, or see Aileen, anyway—not for forty-eight hours."

"Why not?" The voice of Aileen, speaking now, was a little high and sharp, John Schmaar thought.

"I won't have it; that's all," said the Bannerman girl. "He'd get it out of her, sure. And I won't have anybody know it before I do!"

"Oh, that's all right. I'll see to that!" cried Aileen Dulcifer, laughing a high kind of flat laugh. "He won't see me—

not for forty-eight hours—after tonight. I'll promise you that. And he won't know from me!"

"You swear?" demanded the Bannerman girl, snatching up a pocket dictionary from the table.

"I do," said Aileen Dulcifer. They were making a screaming farce of it now, growing a little hysterical,—or the Dulcifer girl was,—Schmaar thought.

"And you too," said Billie Bannerman, turning to the Westerner.

"You'll swear on your honor that you won't open it—that sacred secret pact—until after forty-eight hours, here—in this room!"

"I do, yes," he answered, but still scowling and wondering and confused, as he well might be. And Schmaar was confused, almost, himself. He could scarcely have believed that it could have been done, that the mind of a foolish girl, once started going—darting one way and another, like a scared rabbit in a pen, trying to find a way out—would have landed her, and all the rest of them, in such a situation.

"So, then, that's understood," Billie Bannerman was going on. "There'll be no advantage. He'll not look into that envelope, and you'll not see him, or talk to him, in any way."

"Absolutely," replied Aileen Dulcifer, "—not after tonight."

"So he'll know nothing at all from you!"

"Absolutely not."

"Now, then," said the sprightly Bannerman person, taking charge of the ceremonies as usual, "what's the next move?"

JOHN SCHMAAR showed her—walking over now to the side of the room to the cabinet where he kept his cards. Looking in, he selected the pack he wanted and brought it back to where they all stood around the table.

"This!" he said.

"Cards!" cried Eloise Hunter.

"Worse and worse, and more terrible!" exclaimed Billie Bannerman, laughing again.

John Schmaar put the cards down on the big table between him and Aileen Dulcifer. He looked into her eyes—not smiling now, but with the cold, sinister businesslike eye of the professional gambler. She had wanted it, had she? Well, she was going to have it.

"How many cuts?" he asked. "One or three?"

"I don't care," said the girl.

"Three—by all means! Three!" called Eloise Hunter.

"Absolutely. We want our money's worth. All the thrills there are!"

The big Westerner stood in the background, still doubtful, still scowling—and beside him the silent Armitage. Even Schmaar's sister stood up now, watching, with an apologetic smile.

"All right," said Aileen Dulcifer.

Schmaar nodded his assent without speaking—looking into her face coldly. Her own face was pretty serious now, he saw. The hectic smile had rather dropped away from it.

"Are any side-bets allowable?" asked Billie Bannerman.

"All you want," said Aileen Dulcifer—remembering to smile again.

"How can you bet," inquired the Hunter girl, "when you don't even know what you're betting about?"

"I'll bet on Aileen," said the Bannerman girl, "whatever it is! I'll back my own sex."

"I'll take Mr. Schmaar!" said Eloise Hunter.

They all stood now around the two principals—waiting, laughing, or pretending to, anyway—even John Schmaar's anemic sister with her patient, bloodless smile!

"Ladies first," said John Schmaar, smiling faintly, his eyes gray agate, "unless—"

"Oh, no. I'll cut," she said at once. The speech was hurried. "I'm glad to!"

As she put her hands on the cards, for a second her smile dropped.

"It's all understood?" she asked, looking into Schmaar's face—with the sly gleam she had in her eyes before.

"It sure is," said Schmaar—thinking behind his mask, how different it was going to be right off!

The others stood close, crowding, watching the flushed face of the girl, the dull-skinned, inscrutable features of John Schmaar. He saw she was going through it now, with every nerve and muscle of her face and body. Death lay before her on the table.

"Taking the last chance—at the great sacrifice!" Schmaar said to himself as he watched her put out her hand again for the cards.

She cut a six, John Schmaar an eight-spot. Her eyes gleamed; her upper lip drew back, showing her white teeth. She breathed hard—the disguise of her smile was all gone now.

"Ladies and gents," the Bannerman girl called out in her best circus manner. "first round! The woman leads!"

"Shall I cut first?" Schmaar asked a second time. "Or—"

"No, I'll go first. All the time," she said, recalling once again her smile—and losing it immediately.

The girl's hands were shaking a little; her eyes, you'd think, would burn a hole in the back of the cards.

She cut a queen, John Schmaar a five-spot.

"The gent wins!" cried the Bannerman girl, shouting her circus stuff into the silence. "And now, ladies and gents, for the g-r-r-rand finale!"

THE faces of the little group, which had been laughing before, grew rigid now—almost as rigid as Aileen's. There was something in the atmosphere, in the girl's face, that they didn't understand, of course, but that reached them just the same. Even John Schmaar, staring with his gray agate eyes, could feel the tension.

"This time," he suggested once more, with a faint sneering smile on his face, "if you prefer not—"

"I'll cut first—don't worry—as I have before!" she said, as he knew she would. Reaching over, she cut—a jack!

John Schmaar perceived the queer coincidence—he remembered again in a flash that earlier time when he was a boy.

A groan went up around the table. "Too high! Too high!" screamed Billie Bannerman.

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John Schmaar's hand went out to the spread cards, and cut—his ten-spot!

A groan went up.

"The gent wins!" the Bannerman girl exclaimed, letting her shoulders and arms sink in mock despair. And the rest groaned with her. But Schmaar kept his eyes on Aileen Dulcifer, watching her, seeing if she would even now wake up.

She stood there for a moment, staring. "The great sacrifice, huh?" said Schmaar to himself, watching her. "How do you like it, now you've got it?"

He watched to see the change come into her face with realization.

"Funny—isn't it?" he said to himself, watching her from under his thick eyelids, with her lips open and her eyes staring—going through the thing in her fuddled mind. "Laugh—why don't you!" he said to himself, remembering how things had changed, how ten minutes ago they had all been laughing at him!

"Well," she said, with a hard, obstinate look at Schmaar, "that's settled!"

And then she started laughing. She had changed a little; the quick sly look she had been giving him, was gone. But her laugh didn't sound just right to Schmaar yet.

CHAPTER VI

THE only question now was, of course, just when she was going to realize what a crazy little fool she had been. She was still going too strong—still under too much excitement. Her laugh indicated that.

Schmaar kept watching her through dinner—that merry meal—through the chatter and guesses about the thing, which formed, of course, the chief subject of talk during the meal and after.

She held them off, laughing, with the usual light-hearted bluff in such circumstances, Schmaar perceived as they turned the talk one way and another. They are good at that kind of play—such women—clever at concealing their secret feelings. If Aileen was changing her mind, however, she didn't show it.

After dinner they all stopped at the center-table again in the living-room, and the Hunter girl—always full of tricks to draw the crowd around her—started telling the Dulcifer girl's fortune with the cards—"more man-and-woman stuff," Schmaar muttered to himself.

She saw a dark man, she said, rolling her eyes at Schmaar—and a light man, with another roll toward Gladden. And a journey!

"Yes," she said, flourishing her hands, which were very pretty, "you are going on a long journey."

John Schmaar watched the way the Dulcifer girl took it.

"A long journey!" she cried, raising her hand. "Here's to it—and the light man!"

Whereupon they all cheered for the Westerner. Schmaar watched him now, as closely almost as he had the girl, before. He smiled, with the rest, Schmaar saw, but not easily. He took it hard, apparently—the mysterious envelope in his pocket, the jollying and mystery

about it, and the girl's queer looks and laughter—wondering no doubt what such secrecy between the girl and Schmaar really amounted to.

Schmaar watched them together. The Westerner seemed to be losing control of himself a little, Schmaar thought, right after dinner. He noticed him then trying to get the girl to go to one side with him—into the library—before they started at the cards, and saw her go part way, and then refuse what he was asking and come back. Whereupon the Westerner had flushed and scowled.

After that Schmaar didn't pay much attention for a few minutes—while the women were getting themselves ready for the game. And when they were ready, he looked up, and the Westerner had disappeared.

"Where is he?" he asked. Finally it was discovered that he had left the house.

"Gone!" cried Aileen Dulcifer. An instant she looked as if the stars were falling down about her. Schmaar had never seen quite such a face on any girl. And then she toppled over in a faint.

So the time had come—finally. At last she saw where she had landed. Schmaar was glad, for he had thought, at one time, that she wasn't going to break!

That broke up the game, of course. The women assisted the girl upstairs when she came to. Captain Armitage, after sitting around a few minutes, his mind and tongue completely frozen, finally excused himself and started back to New York.

Schmaar sat there alone, waiting and figuring on what should come next, just when and how the girl would come around to him, and what they would have to do to square that thing she had started with that fool envelope and make it seem sensible when they opened it. He sat there smoking and thinking until the women came down—or rather until Billie Bannerman came down alone—the other girl staying upstairs with Aileen, and his sister going back into her room. But the Bannerman girl, of course, had to come back—she couldn't help it.

"What's going on here?" she blurted out. Bluntness was her specialty. "What are you doing to her?"

"Nothing," answered Schmaar. "She's the one that's doing it."

"You and your envelope!" she went on.

"What is she," Schmaar asked her, "crazy? Do you know?"

"Why?" she asked.

"She's been acting so."

"I should say she had," she admitted.

"She's been that way," said Schmaar, "since yesterday, since that fool talk you and your little friend Eloise started."

"And our Westerner continued."

"Would you believe," he said, "that anybody just like her would take that in—all that slush he was handing out?"

"Was that what started her," she asked, edging on, "on whatever this thing is?"

"Yes. Would you believe it?"

"Yes. I would."

"Why?"

"You noticed who was talking it to her, didn't you?" she asked him.

"What of it?"

"Listen," she said. She was one of the kind who make a specialty of plain speaking when they are alone with a man. "Are you still after her?"

"Why?" he asked her.

"You must be the one that's crazy. That's all!"

"I crazy!" said Schmaar. "What about her!"

"That's different, at her age," she said. She was a little older than the other girl. "Crazy—of course they're crazy then. That's the normal thing to be. But you wouldn't know it! Because you never were there—in your life. You never were normal that way," she said.

"Normal!" repeated Schmaar, his mind going back to yesterday. "How? I suppose all that slush we heard from Gladden was normal!"

"For him—yes, in his condition."

"And what about her?" he asked, looking over at her again, mocking the Westerner's voice. "A good woman—the bravest thing in the world! The great sacrifice! You watched her drinking that in!"

"Why not!" she asked. "They do—don't they? The trouble is with you."

"Me."

"You—yes. You've never fallen in love! You don't know what it is!"

"No. Never. Not I!" said Schmaar.

"No, you never did. So you never had any experience with women."

"No," said Schmaar, "I guess not."

"No. The trouble with you is, you've got the wrong idea of them," she said. "Too limited by your own mind. You think a woman's a nice, expensive table d'hôte dinner. She isn't—honest! She's something different—as you'd know, if you ever got one in love with you."

"The bravest thing in the world—when she cares, huh? Always ready for the great sacrifice!"

"Sure," she answered instantly. "That's one way of putting it. You take this case, right here. Is there anything she wouldn't do, or anything she wouldn't try to do, if he wanted her to do it?"

"WHO—Aileen—that little bunch of fluff?"

"What difference does that make?" she asked him. "Where have you been all these days? Are you blind? I believe you are, at that. Haven't you ever seen her look at him? If he asked to have her eyes to roll marbles with, she'd have them out before he was through, and hand them to him. And if anything started happening to him, if he was going to be hurt in any way, she wouldn't lose her head—no, she'd just take it under her arm, and run out across country wild, attacking everything she came to. And if anybody started in to hurt him—oh, boy—oh, man!"

"You're standing on your head yourself," said Schmaar. "You've got them mixed. You're talking about him—not her. I know. I know how it started!"

"Maybe you do," she said. "It may have started like that. They are both bad enough, but now she's the worst of the two."

"That lightweight—that never had an idea except to spend all the money she could raise and rake upon herself! She's a great self-sacrificer—that one!"

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"Wrong again," she told him. "Light or heavy, good or bad or indifferent, we're all alike when we're that way. She may be just as light as you say; I guess she is. But let me tell you something," she said, talking bold and rough again: "she'd go to hell, with flowers on, singing—for him—like the fellow, you know, in one of those operas. That's what she thinks of him. And when it comes to being crazy, you're the crazy one—and the blind one—to butt into a thing of this sort, at this stage of the game."

SCHMAAR sat listening to her rave on, turning things upside down, but somewhat confused by what she said, too, for he perceived that underneath she was serious and meant just what she was telling him.

"You make me laugh," she went on, "the way you miss the point of this thing."

"I do, huh?" said Schmaar—puzzled, but not showing it, naturally.

"Yes. You know what this is, that you've been missing right along?"

"Shoot."

"You know that thing we were saying about that song tonight, being a signal between them—for her to go out and meet him?"

"I do—yes."

"That was just right. That's just one scene out of many—in this play. This is an old-fashioned case."

"With her?"

"Yes, with her—just as much as with him. Old-fashioned love-stuff—full of signs, and secret words and signals between them. You'd laugh," she said, "at some of them."

She stopped and laughed herself, while Schmaar continued to watch her, still a little confused, wondering at her bringing out all this he had overlooked himself.

"What are you laughing at now?" he asked her finally.

"There's one," she said, still laughing, "that's a wonder!"

"What's that?"

"Did you ever notice that just before eleven o'clock—when he isn't here, how she always excuses herself—and goes upstairs?"

"Maybe," said Schmaar. He seemed to half-remember it. "What of it?"

"That's when they say good night—to each other!"

"When he's away—in New York?"

"Yes. Sure."

"How?"

"You know how her room lies, don't you, on the east side, the northeast corner of the house?"

"What of that?"

"And you know how plain you can see the lights of the city from there, and the Metropolitan Tower?"

"Naturally."

"You know how the big clock strikes the hour—red flashes—then white?"

"What of it?"

"Nothing, only that's when they say good night to each other, both looking at it, from their own rooms, thinking of each other at the same time, looking at the same thing, at eleven o'clock!"

"Aw—what're you giving us?" said Schmaar, staring at her blankly.

"Don't you believe it?" she asked.

"All right. Do you want to see it for yourself? All right. You go out there and hide yourself, somewhere behind those trees; and watch at that window, any night, any clear night, when he isn't here, just before eleven o'clock—and see what you see!"

"In the moonlight," said Schmaar, still doubting her.

"In the moonlight—or any other night," she told him, and he could see she meant it.

"Oh, you think I don't know," she said. "But I do, and I can prove it to you. And I could tell you something else if you wanted to know."

"What?"

"That's why she fainted tonight."

"Yes?" said Schmaar—smiling again, at her explaining that, to the only one who did know why she fainted. "All right. Why did she?"

"Because he went away without saying good-by to her! You saw that. You know what he did—left her—regardless—mad."

"Yes," said Schmaar, back on firm ground again. "I know a number of things that you don't."

"About that envelope, you mean. I don't doubt it. But I know this, whether you do or not!"

"How do you know it?" he asked.

"I know it because I was there," she said, "when she came out of that faint! There was something special about it—some special reason, why it was extra important that he say good night to her tonight—of all nights in the world! I don't know what it's all about, but I know that because I heard it!"

John Schmaar moved a little.

"Maybe you know the rest," she told him, guessing. "It might have something to do with that envelope; I don't know. But I do know, that she put some great importance on saying good night tonight. You'd have thought, to hear her, when she was coming to, that it was her last night on earth!"

John Schmaar covered the little start he gave at that, and made to close the talk as soon as he could. But the Bannerman girl had to continue awhile of course, airing her opinion.

"You make me laugh, your kind—always," she told him. "You know all about women. You know how to find your way around anywhere at night, as well as day. But there's one place you've never been."

"Where's that?" Schmaar asked her.

"Where they are now—those two. That impossible country that you inhabit—when you're young, when you're first in love. I know it," she said, sobering down a second. "I was there once. But you never were!"

It was nearly a quarter of eleven before he could get rid of her. He could still stroll outdoors and post himself by that window. Maybe you can't always tell about them. There *has* been another woman once, that they had tried to make Schmaar responsible for—for what she had done to herself before she—before she got over being excited.

The conclusion of Mr. Turner's fascinating story will appear in the forthcoming October issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE.

THE TIGER

(Continued from page 41)

as she and Elsie followed his suggestion and emerged from the shop. "It's just this same way whenever I go shopping! I never can find the things I want; they act almos' like they don't care whether they keep 'em or not."

"It's dreadful!" Elsie agreed, and greatly enjoying the air of annoyance they were affecting, they proceeded on their way. No one would have believed them aware that they were being followed; and neither had spoken a word referring to Master Coy; but they must have understood each other perfectly in the matter, for presently Daisy's head turned ever so slightly, and she sent a backward glance out of the very tail of her eye. "He's still comin'!" she said in a whisper that was ecstatic with mirth. And Elsie, in the same suppressed but joyous fashion, said: "Course he is, the ole thing!" This was the only break in their manner of being the busiest shoppers in the world; and immediately after it they became more flauntingly shoppers than ever.

AS for Laurence, his curiosity was now almost equal to his bitterness. The visit to the drug-store he could understand, but that to the barber-shop astounded him; and when he came to the shop he paused to flatten his nose upon the window. The fat mulatto barber nearest the window was still massaging the face of the recumbent customer and continuing his narrative; the other barbers were placidly grooming the occupants of their chairs, while two or three waiting patrons, lounging on a bench, read periodicals of a worn and flaccid appearance. Nothing gave any clue to the errand of Laurence's fair friends; on the contrary, everything that was revealed to his staring eyes made their visit seem all the more singular.

He went in, and addressed himself to the fat barber. "Listen," he said. "Listen. I want to ask you somp'm." "Dess 'bout when she was fixin' to holler," the barber continued, to his patron, "I take an' slap my money ri' back in my pocket. 'You talk 'bout tryin' show me some class,' I say. 'Dess lem me—'"

"Listen!" Laurence said, speaking louder. "I want to ask you somp'm."

"Dess lem me tell you, if you fixin' show me some class," the barber went on. "'If you fixin' show me some class,' I say. 'Dess lem me tell you if—'"

"Listen!" Laurence insisted. "I want to ask you somp'm."

For a moment the barber ceased to manipulate his customer and gave Laurence a look of disapproval. "Listen me, boy!" he said. "Nex' time you flatten you' face on nat window you don' haf to breave on nat glass, do you? Ain' you' folks taught you no better'n go roun' dirtyin' up nice clean window?"

"What I want to know," Laurence said, "—what were they doin' in here?"

"What were who doin' in here?"

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"Those two little girls that were in here just now. What did they come here for?"

"My goo'nuss!" the barber exclaimed. "Man'd think barber got nothin' do but stan' here all day nanswer questions! Run out, boy!"

"But listen!" Laurence urged him. "What were they—"

"Run out, boy!" the barber said, and his appearance became formidable. "Run out, boy!"

Laurence departed silently, though in his mind he added another outrage to the revenge he owed the world for the insults and mistreatments he was receiving that morning. "I'll show you!" he mumbled in his throat as he came out of the shop. "You'll wish you had some sense, when I get through with you, you ole barber, you!"

Then, as he looked before him, his curiosity again surpassed his sense of injury. The busy shoppers were just coming out of a harness-shop which was making a bitter struggle to survive the automobile; and as they emerged from the place, they had for a moment the hasty air of ejected persons. But this was a detail that escaped Laurence's observation, for the gestures and chatter were instantly resumed, and the two hurried on as before.

"My gracious!" said Laurence, and when he came to the harness-shop, he halted, and looked in through the open door; but the expression of the bearded man behind a counter was so discouraging that he thought it best to make no inquiries.

The bearded man was as irritable as he looked. "Listen," he called. "Don't block up that door, d'you hear me? Go on, get away from there and let some air in. Gosh!"

Laurence obeyed morosely. "Well, doggone it!" he said.

He had no idea that the pair preceding him might have been received as cavalierly, for their air of being people engaged in matters of importance had all the effect upon him they desired, and deceived him perfectly. Moreover the mystery of what they had done in the barber-shop and in the harness-shop was actually dismaying; they were his colleagues in age and his inferiors in sex; and yet all upon a sudden, this morning, they appeared to deal upon the adult plane and to have business with strange grown people. Laurence was unwilling to give them the slightest ground for a conceited supposition that he took any interest in them, or their doings, but he made up his mind that if they went into another shop, he would place himself in a position to observe what they did, even at the risk of their seeing him.

Four or five blocks away, the business part of the city began to be serious; buildings of ten or twelve stories, several of much more than that, were piled against the sky; but here, where walked the shoppers and their disturbed shadower, the street had fallen upon slovenly days. Farther out, in the quarter whence they had come, it led a life of comfortable prosperity, but gradually, as it descended southward, its character altered dismally, until here for a couple of blocks, just before it began

to be respectable again, as a business street, it was not only shabby but had a covert air of underhand enterprise. And the windows had not been arranged with the idea of offering a view of the interiors.

Of course Elsie and Daisy did not concern themselves with the changed character of the street; one shop was as good as another for the purposes involved in the kind of shopping that engaged them this morning; and they were having too glorious a time to give much consideration to anything. Elsie had fallen under the spell of a daring leadership; she was as excited as Daisy, as intent as she upon preserving the illusion they maintained between them; and both of them were delightedly aware that they must be goading their frowning follower with a splendid series of mysteries.

"I declare!" Daisy said, affecting peevishness. "I forgot to look at ostrich feathers an' unbeached muslin at both those two last places we went. Let's try in here."

By "in here" she referred to a begrimed and ignoble façade once painted dark green, but now the color of street-dust mixed with soot. Admission was to be obtained by double doors, with opaque glass for the middle parts and the word "Café" upon both of the panels. "Café" was also repeated upon a window; and a sign-painter of great inexperience had added the details: "*Soft Drinks Candys Cigars & C.*" And upon three shelves in the window were displayed, as convincing proof of the mercantile innocence of the place, three or four corn-cob pipes, some fly-specked packets of tobacco, several packages of old popcorn and a small bottle of catsup.

Daisy tugged at the greasy brass knob projecting from one of the once green doors, and after some reluctance it yielded. "Come on," she said. The two then walked importantly into the place, and the door closed behind them.

Laurence immediately hurried forward; but what he beheld was discouraging. The glass of the double door was frankly opaque; and that of the window was so dirty and besooted, and so obstructed by the shelves of sparse merchandise, that he could see nothing whatever beyond the shelves.

"Well, dog-gone it!" he said.

DAISY and Elsie found themselves the only visible occupants of an interior unexampled in their previous experience. Along one side of the room, from wall to wall, there ran what they took to be a counter for the display of salable goods, though it had nothing upon it except a blackened little jar of matches and a short thick glass goblet, dimmed at the bottom with an ancient sediment. A brass rail extended along the base of the counter, and on the wall, behind, was a long mirror, once lustrous, no doubt, but now coated with a white that had begun to suffer from soot. Upon the wall opposite the mirror there were two old lithographs, one of a steamboat, the other of a horse and jockey; and there were some posters advertising cigarettes, but these decorations completed the invoice of all that was visible to the shoppers.

"Oh, dear!" Daisy said. "Wouldn't it be too provoking if they'd gone to lunch or somep'm!" And she tapped as loudly as she could upon the counter, calling: "Here! Somebody come an' wait on us. I want to look at some of your nicest unbeached muslin an' some orstrich feathers."

There was a door at the other end of the room and it stood open, revealing a narrow and greasy passage, with decrepit walls that showed the laths, here and there, where areas of plaster had fallen. "I guess I better go call in that little hallway," said Daisy. "They don't seem to care *how* long they keep their customers waitin'!"

But as she approached the door, the sound of several muffled explosions came from the rear of the building and reached the shoppers through the funnel of the sinister passage.

"That's funny," said Daisy. "I guess somebody's shootin' off firecrackers back there."

"What for?" Elsie asked.

"I guess they think it must be the Fourth o' July," Daisy said; and she called down the passageway: "Here! Come wait on us. We want to look at some unbeached muslin an' orstrich feathers. Can't you hurry up?"

NO one replied, but voices became audible, approaching—voices in simultaneous outbursts, and manifesting such extremes of poignant emotion that although there were only two of them, a man's and a woman's, Daisy and Elsie at first supposed that seven or eight people were engaged in the controversy. For a moment they also supposed the language to be foreign, but discovered that some of the expressions used were familiar, though they had been accustomed to hear them under more decorous circumstances.

"They're makin' an awful fuss," Elsie said. "What *are* they talkin' about?"

"The way it sounds," said Daisy, "it sounds like they're talkin' about things in the Bible."

Then another explosion was heard, closer; it seemed to come from a region just beyond the passageway; and it was immediately followed by a clatter of lumber and an increase of eloquence in the vocal argument.

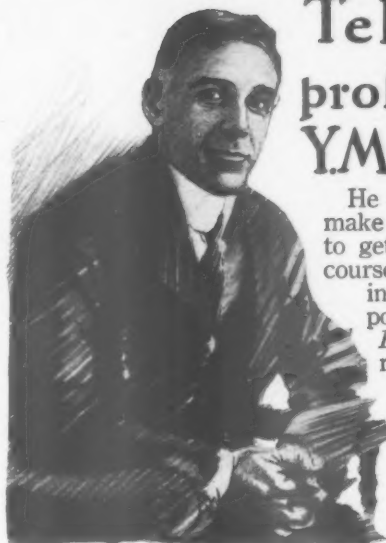
"You quit that!" the man's voice bellowed plaintively. "You don't know what you're doin'; you blame near croaked me that time! You quit that, Mabel!"

"I'm a-goin' to learn you!" the woman's voice announced. "You come out from under them boards, and I'll learn you whether I know what I'm doin' or not! Come out!"

"Please go on away and lea' me alone," the man implored. "I never done nothin' to you. I never seen a cent o' that money! Honest, George never give me a cent of it. Why'n't you go an ast him? He's right in yonder. Oh, my goodness, why'n't you ast him?"

"Come out from under them boards!"

The man's voice became the more passionate in its protesting. "Oh, my goodness, I never sold that hootch to nobody! Mabel, can't you jest ast



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George? He aint left the place; you know *that!* He can't show his face in daytime, and he's right there in the bar, and so's Limpy. Limpy'll tell you jest the same as what George will, if you'll only go and ast 'em. *Why* can't you go and ast 'em?"

"Yes!" the woman cried. "And while I'm in there astin' 'em, where'll you be? Over the alley fence and a mile away! You come out from under them boards and git half croaked like you're a-goin' to!"

"Oh, my goodness!" the man wailed. "I wish I had somep'm on me to lam you over the bean with! Jest once! That's all I'd ast—jest one little short crack at you!"

"You come out from under them boards!"

"I wont! I'll lay here till—"

"We'll see!" the woman cried. "We'll see how long you'll lay there! I'm a-goin' to dig you out. I'm a-goin' to take them boards off o' you and then I'm goin' to half croak you. I am!"

Elsie moved toward the outer door. "They talk so—so funny!" she said with a little anxiety. "I doe' b'lieve it's about the Bible."

"I guess she's mad at somebody about somep'm," Daisy said, much amused; and stepping nearer the passageway, she called: "*Here!* We want to look at some unbeached muslin an' orstrich feathers!"

But the room beyond the passage was now in turmoil: planks were clattering again, and both voices were uproarious. The man's became a squawk as another explosion took place; he added an incomplete Scriptural glossary in falsetto; and Elsie began to be nervous.

"That's awful big firecrackers they're usin'," she said. "I guess we ought to go home, maybe, Daisy."

"Oh, they're just kind of quarrelin' or somep'm," Daisy explained, not at all disturbed. "If you listen up our alley you can hear colored people talkin' like that lots o' times. They do this way, an' they settle down again, or else they're only in fun. But I do wish these people'd come, because I just *haf* to finish my shopping!" And, as yet another explosion was heard, she exclaimed complacently: "My! That's a big one!"

Then, beyond the passage, there seemed to be a final upheaval of lumber; the discussion reached a climax of vociferation, and a powerful, bald-headed man, without a coat, plunged through the passage and into the room. His unscholarly brow and rotund jowls were beaded; his agonized eyes saw nothing; he ran to the bar, and vaulted over it, vanishing behind it half a second before the person looking for him appeared in the doorway.

SHE was a small, rather shabby woman, who held one hand concealed in the folds of her skirt, while with the other she hastily cleared her eyes of some loosened strands of her reddish hair.

"I got you, Chollie!" she said. "You're behind the bar, and I'm a-goin' to make a good job of it, and get George and

Limpy, too. I'm goin' to get all three of you!"

With that, she darted across the room and ran behind the bar; whereupon Daisy and Elsie were treated to a scene like a conjuror's trick. Until the bald-headed man's arrival, they had supposed themselves to be quite alone in the room, but as the little woman ran behind the counter, not only this fugitive popped up from it, but two other panic-stricken men besides—one with uneven whiskers all over his mottled face, the other with no whiskers but a great many confusing moles. The three shot up simultaneously like three Jacks-in-the-box, and scrambling over the counter, dropped flat on the floor in front of it, leaving the little woman behind.

"Crawl up to the end o' the bar, George," the bald-headed man said, hoarsely. "When she comes out from behind it, jump and grab her wrist."

"Think I'm deaf?" the little woman inquired raucously. "George's got a fat chance to grab *my* wrist!"

Then her eyes, somewhat inflamed, fell upon Daisy and Elsie. "Well, what—what—what—" she said.

Daisy stepped toward the counter, for she felt that she had indeed delayed her business long enough.

"We'd like to look at some nice unbeached muslin," she said, "an' some of your very best orstrich feathers."

THE subsequent commotions, as well as the preceding ones, were indistinctly audible to the mystified person who waited upon the sidewalk outside the place. Finding that his eyes revealed nothing of the interior, he had placed his ear against the window, and the muffled reports, mistaken for firecrackers by Daisy and Elsie, were similarly interpreted by Laurence; but he supposed Daisy and Elsie to have a direct connection with the sounds. A thought of the Fourth of July entered his mind, as it had Daisy's, but it solved nothing for him: the Fourth was long past; this was not the sort of store that promised firecrackers; and even if Daisy and Elsie had taken firecrackers with them, how had it happened that they were allowed to explode them indoors? As for an "ottomatic" or a "revolver," he knew that neither maiden would touch such a thing, for he had heard them express their aversion to the antics of Robert Eliot, on an occasion when Master Eliot had surreptitiously borrowed his father's "good ole six-shooter" to disport himself with in the Threamers' garage.

Nothing could have been more evident than that Daisy and Elsie had definite affairs to transact in this "cafe;" the air with which they entered it was a conclusive demonstration of that. But the firecrackers made guessing at the nature of those affairs even more hopeless than when the pair had visited the barber-shop and the harness-shop. Then, as a closer report sounded, Laurence jumped. "*Giant* firecracker!" he exclaimed huskily, and his eyes still widened; for now vague noises of tumult and altercation could be heard.

"Well, my go-o-od-nuss!" he said.

Two pedestrians halted near him.

"Say, listen," one of them said. "What's goin' on in there?"

"Golly!" the other exclaimed, adding: "I happen to know it's a blind tiger."

Laurence's jaw dropped, and he stared at the man incredulously. "Wha-wha'd you say?"

"Listen," the man returned. "How long's all this been goin' on in there?"

"Just since they went in there. It was just a little while ago. Wha'd you say about—"

But he was interrupted. Several other passers-by had paused, and they began to make interested inquiries of the first two.

"What's the trouble in there? What's going on here? What's all the shooting? What's—"

"There's *something* pretty queer goin' on," said the man who had spoken to Laurence; and he added: "It's a blind tiger."

"Yes, I know that," another said. "I was in there once, and I know from my own eyes it's a blind tiger."

Laurence began to be disconcerted.

"A blind tiger?" he gasped. "A blind tiger?" What caused his emotion was not anxiety for the safety of his friends; the confident importance with which they had entered the place convinced him that if there actually was a blind tiger within, they were perfectly aware of the circumstance and knew what they were doing when they entered the animal's presence. His feeling about them was indefinite and hazy; yet it was certainly a feeling incredulous but awed, such as anyone might have about people, well known to him, who suddenly appear to be possessed of supernatural powers. "Honest, d'you b'lieve there's a blind tiger in there?" he asked of the man who had confirmed the strange information.

"Sure!"

"Honest, is one in there? Do you honest—"

BUT no one paid him any further attention. By this time a dozen or more people had gathered; others were arriving; and as the tumult behind the formerly green door increased, hurried discussion became general on the sidewalk. Several men said that somebody ought to go in and see what the matter was; others said that they themselves would be willing to go in, but they didn't like to do it without a warrant; and two or three declared that nobody ought to go in just at that time. One of these was emphatic, especially upon the duty men owe to themselves. "A man owes *something* to himself," he said. "A man owes it to himself not to git no forty-four in his gizzard by takin' and pushin' into a place where somebody's *usin'* a forty-four. A man owes it to himself to keep out o' trouble unless he's got some call to take and go bullin' into it; *that's* what he owes to himself!"

Another seemed to be depressed by the scandal involved. He was an unshaven person of a general appearance naïvely villainous, and, without a hat or coat, he had hurried across the street from an establishment not essentially unlike that under discussion—precisely



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like it, in fact, in declaring itself (though without the accent) to be a place where coffee in the French manner might be expected. "What worries me is," he said gloomily, and he repeated this over and over, "what worries me is, it gives the neighborhood kind of a poor name. What worries me, it's gittin' the neighborhood all talked about and everything, the way you wouldn't want it to, yourself."

Laurence took a fancy to this man, whose dejection had a quality of pathos that seemed to imply a sympathetic nature.

"Is there one—honestly?" Laurence asked him. "Cross your heart there is one?"

The gloomy man continued to address his lament to the one or two acquaintances who were listening to him. "It's just like this—what worries me is—"

But Laurence tugged at his soiled shirt-sleeve. "Is there honest one in there?"

"Is there one *what* in there?" the man asked with unexpected gruffness.

"A blind tiger!"

The gloomy man instantly became of a terrifying aspect. He roared:

"Git away f'm here!"

Then, as Laurence hastily retreated, the man shook his head, and added to his grown listeners: "Aint that jest what I says? It gits everybody to talk-in'—even a lot of awnry dressed-up little boys! It aint right, and Chollie and Mabel ought to have some consideration. Other folks has got to live as well as them! Why, I tell you—"

He stopped, and with a woeful exclamation, pointed to the street-corner south of them. "Look there! It's that blame sister-in-law o' George's. I reckon she must of run out through the alley. Now they *have* done it!"

HIS allusion was to a most blonde young woman, whose toilet, evidently of the hastiest, had called upon one or two garments intended for the street as an emergency supplement to others eloquent of the intimate boudoir. She came hurrying, her blue crocheted slippers scurrying in and out of variegated draperies; and all the while, she talked incessantly, and with agitation, to a patrolman in uniform who hastened beside her. Naturally, they brought behind them an almost magically increasing throng of citizens, aliens and minors.

They hurried to the once green doors; the patrolman swung these open, and he and the blonde young woman went in. So did the crowd, thus headed and protected by the law's very symbol; and Laurence went with them.

Carried along, jostled and stepped upon, he could see nothing; and inside the solidly filled room he found himself jammed against a woman who surged in front of him. She was a fat woman, and tall, with a great, bulbous, black cotton cloth back; and just behind Laurence there pressed a short and muscular man who never for an instant relaxed the most passionate efforts to see over the big woman. He stood on tiptoe, stretching himself by pushing hard down on Laurence's shoulders; and he constantly shoved forward, inclosing Lau-

rence's head between himself and the big woman's waist, so that Laurence found breathing difficult and uncomfortable. The black cotton cloth, against which his nose was pushed out of shape, smelled as if it had been in the rain—at least that was the impression obtained by means of his left nostril, which remained partially unobstructed; and he did not like it.

In a somewhat dazed and hazy way he had expected to see Daisy and Elsie and a blind tiger, but naturally, under these circumstances, no such expectation could be realized. Nor did he hear anything said about either the tiger or the little girls; the room was a chaos of voices, though bits of shrill protestation, and gruffer interruptions from the central group, detached themselves.

"I never!" cried the shrillest voice. "I never even pointed it at any of 'em! So help me—"

"Now look *here*—" Laurence somehow got an idea that this was the policeman's voice. "Now look *here*—" it said loudly, over and over, but was never able to get any farther; for the shrill woman and the plaintive but insistent voices of three men interrupted at that point, and persisted in interrupting as long as Laurence was in the room.

He could bear the black cotton back no longer, and squirming, he made his elbow uncomfortable to the aggressive man who tortured him.

"*Here!*" this person said indignantly. "Take your elbow out o' my stomach and stand still. How d'you expect anybody to see what's going on with you making all this fuss? Be quiet!"

"I wont," said Laurence thickly. "You lea' me out o' here!"

"Well, for heaven's sakes!" the oppressive little man exclaimed. "Make some more trouble for people that want to see something! Go on and get out, then! Oh, Lordy!"

This last was a petulant wail as Laurence squirmed round him; then the pressure of the crowd filled the gap by throwing the little man against the fat woman's back. "Dam boy!" he raved, putting all his troubles under one head.

But Laurence heard him not; he was writhing his way to the wall; and, once he reached it, he struggled toward the open doors, using his shoulder as a wedge between spectators and the wall. Thus he won free of the press and presently got himself out to the sidewalk, panting. And then, looking about him, he glanced up the street.

At the next crossing to the north two busy little figures were walking rapidly homeward. They were gesturing importantly; their heads were wagging to confirm these gestures; and they were chattering incessantly.

"Well—dog-gone it!" Laurence whispered.

He followed them; but now his lips moved not at all, and there was no mumbling in his throat. He stared at them amazedly, in a great mental silence.

"**WHAT** wears me out the most," Daisy said, as they came into their own purloins again, "it's this shopping, shopping, shopping, and they never have one single thing!"

"No, they don't," Elsie agreed. "Not a thing! It just wears me out!"

"F'instance," Daisy continued, "look at how they acted in that las' place when I wanted to see some ostrich feathers. Just said 'What!' about seven hundred times! An' then that ole pleece-man came in!"

For a moment Elsie dropped her rôle as a tired shopper, and giggled nervously. "I was scared," she said.

But Daisy tossed her head. "It's no use goin' shopping in a store like that; they never *have* anything, and I'll never waste my time on 'em again. Crazy things!"

"They did act crazy," Elsie said thoughtfully, as they paused at her gate. "I guess we better not tell about it to our mothers, maybe."

"No," Daisy agreed; and then with an elaborate gesture of fatigue she said: "Well, my dear, I hope you're not as worn out as I am! My nerves are just completely *gone*, my dear!"

"So're mine!" said Elsie; and then, after a quick glance to the south, she giggled. "There's that ole *thing*, still comin' along—no, he's stopped, an' look-in' at us!" She went into the yard. "Well, my dear, I must go in an' lay down an' rest myself. We'll go shopping again just as soon as my nerves get better, my dear!"

SHE skipped into the house, and Daisy, humming to herself, walked on to her own gate, went in, and sat in a wicker rocking-chair under the walnut tree. She rocked herself and sang a wordless song, but becoming aware of a presence that lingered upon the sidewalk near the gate, she checked both her song and the motion of the chair and looked that way. Master Coy was staring over the gate at her; and she had never known that he had such large eyes.

He was full of formless questions, but he had no vocabulary; in truth, his whole being was one intensified interrogation.

"What you want?" Daisy called.

"I was there," he said solemnly. "I was there too. I was in that place where the pleece-man was."

"I doe' care," Daisy remarked, and began to sing and to rock the chair again. "I doe' care where you went," she said.

"I was there," said Laurence. "I saw that ole bline tiger. That's nothin'!"

Daisy had no idea of what he meant, but she remained undisturbed. "I doe' care," she sang. "I doe' care, I doe' care, I doe' care what you saw."

"Well, I did!" said Laurence, and he moved away, walking backward and staring at her.

She went on singing, "I doe' care," and rocking, and Laurence continued to walk backward and stare at her. He walked backward, still staring, all the way to the next corner. There, as it was necessary for him to turn toward his own home, he adopted a more customary and convenient manner of walking—but his eyes continued to be of unnatural dimensions.

"Ladies' Ways," another charming story of youth by Mr. Tarkington, will appear in the forthcoming October issue.

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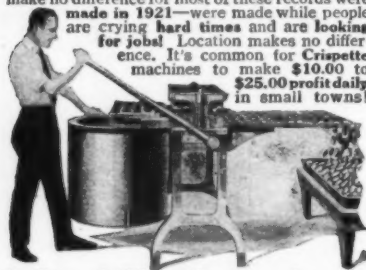
In his office you will find no hot lamps to warm the chilly; no violet rays to counteract the blues; no stretching machines to make the short lengthen; no dietetic fads to find the food a weakened stomach will digest; no salts, sulphur, or electric baths to forcibly eliminate the poisons; no vibrators to stir the sluggish into life. He KNOWS that the Supreme Architect and Builder designed and built the human body, and that when the machine does not run properly an adjustment is all that is required. He scorns these catch-penny confessions of incompetency and confines his efforts to learning how to locate and correct the cause of disease. He will not prostitute his science for money and you will find the space in his offices filled with waiting patients instead of catch-penny devices.

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SOULS FOR SALE

(Continued from page 33)

which the soul recoils and finds a pride in its own superior height.

The Doctor fell back before such insulted innocence. He sought a hasty shield behind another question.

"Then what other obstacle can there be? This is a free country. You don't have to ask anybody's permission?"

Remember was so distraught that she gave the one true reason, sobbing in the gable of her arms.

"The Kalkulator factory closes next week, and Elwood's position will be gone."

"Young Farnaby, eh?" the Doctor mused.

Remember lifted her head again, and her hands twitched as if to recapture the secret she had let slip. But it was too late; she had not even protected Elwood from exposure.

The Doctor thought busily. The word Farnaby presented the complete picture of the family whose woes and poverty he had long known. He felt encouraged after a first discouragement.

"Elwood's a nice boy," he said. "He'll do what's right. I'll call him up right away. Duty is more than skin-deep with him."

Even as he took up the prehensile telephone, Remember snatched it from his hand.

"He wants to do what's right, but his first duty is to his mother. He's supporting his whole family. They'll starve without his help. And what he's going to do when the factory closes, I don't know. He can't marry me. And I won't marry him and drag him down."

"There's no dragging him down. You'll make a wonderful wife, and anybody ought to be proud to have you. You'll be a great help in his career."

"But how can we live together?" she cried frantically.

"Don't. The main thing's the ceremony. Just you step out and get married. People will say you're a couple of young fools. But that's all they will say, and they'll enjoy a bit of romance in this dead burg."

He evaded Remember's pleading hands and called the factory.

Remember's embarrassment was overwhelming before the prospect of meeting in the presence of a witness the fellow-victim of the tidal wave that had engulfed them both one mellow Sabbath evening.

She was wakened from her fierce revery, however, by the Doctor's voice:

"Elwood's out; he's gone to the bank for the firm. I left word for him to call me as soon as he comes in. I've been thinking up a little plan."

LIKE many another earnest soul, Doctor Bretherick was addicted to plotty stories, and he had acquired a knack of thinking ahead of his author and comparing his own development of the tale with the one beneath his eyes.

Like nearly everybody else in the country, Doctor Bretherick had tried his hand at this newest indoor sport, the

writing of stories for moving pictures—a popular vice that had largely replaced the older custom of writing plays. So now he improvised for Remember's future what a moving picture man would call a "continuity."

"This afternoon after the factory closes, you and Elwood can meet and drive over to Mosby. I know the town clerk over there—he owes me a bill. I'll telephone him to make out the licenses and have 'em all ready for you when you get there. He can marry you or get a judge to, or a parson. You'd prefer a preacher, I suppose. Well, I can arrange that, too. I'll vouch for you both, and he'll say the necessary words and give you a nice certificate, and then you can telephone your father from Mosby and ask for his blessing. He won't give it over the telephone, but he will the next day when you two will drive back like a couple of prodigals. Your father will see you coming from afar, and he'll run out and fall on your necks.

"You can ask forgiveness, and then you can explain about Elwood's job and how you'll have to live at home till he gets another. Heaven knows you earn your board and keep at home, and they'll be mighty glad to have you there. By and by Elwood will find a new job, and you'll get rich and live happily ever after—"

REMEMBER was almost smiling at the shabby heaven he threw on the screen of her imagination. It was so much better than anything she had hoped. Then her old enemy, the arch-realist, the sneering censor Poverty, slashed at the dream.

"I don't believe Elwood could afford the money. He'd have to pay the livery stable for the horse and buggy, and there's the license fee, and the ring, and the preacher, and the—the hotel, and—oh, I don't believe we could afford it."

"I'll lend you all that," the Doctor insisted. "I'm one of those authors that has enough confidence in his story to back it himself. You go ahead and get happiness and quit grieving. And don't you dare to change my manuscript. I'm one of those picknickety authors that believe actresses should act and let the authors auth."

Remember was laughing through her tears when the telephone rang.

The Doctor's welcoming "Hello!" broke through a many-wrinkled smile. It froze to a grimace. As Remember watched, hearing only a rattling, inarticulate noise as from a mannikin inside the telephone, the Doctor's pleated skin was slowly drawn into new folds until his face, from being a cartoon of old hilarity, became a withered mummy of dejection. He kept saying "Yes Yes Yes!" and finally: "That's right—bring him here."

He set down the telephone as if it were a cup of hemlock.

"It wasn't Elwood," Remember said.

"No. Yes. Well—oh, God, what a bitter world this is!"

Remember caught eagerly at grief.
 "Tell me! What's happened? What's happened to Elwood? He's hurt. He's killed."

And since she had seized the knife from his reluctant hand and driven it into her heart, he left it there and said:
 "Yes. He's dead. There's nothing left for you, little girl, but bravery."

CHAPTER IV

THE Doctor had not told the exact truth. For once his lie was worse than the truth.

Young Farnaby was not dead—not yet. But from what he had been told, the Doctor was sure that death was decreed. As his mind, so habited to fatal news, struggled with this message, it seemed better to leave Remember in her despair than to raise her to a brief suspense.

He would make a fight for the young man's life, as always; he never gave up while there was any life to fight for. Then if by some strange good fortune he should redeem this youth from the grave, it would be a glorious privilege to restore him to his sweetheart. But if he should keep her hope alive, then lose the war, he must kill her twice.

It seemed as if he had struck her dead already. For her clenched hands let each other go, her arms fell outward like the wings of a shot bird, her head fell on her breast, and she was slipping to the floor when he caught her.

For the mercy of this swoon he was as nearly thankful as he could be for anything. He got her up in his arms, carried her to the door, opened it with much fumbling and staggered up the stairs with her to the spare room, calling to his wife:

"Get her undressed and keep her in bed till I come back. Don't let her talk. Don't mind what she says. But keep her here till I tell you."

Then he hurried downstairs to meet the crowd running to his gate in pursuit of an automobile. He recognized it as the Seipp car. Its fenders were crumpled and stained, and men got out of it, removed with much trouble a long limp body, and moved up the walk. . . .

When a little later Remember came suddenly back to the world, she found Mrs. Bretherick bending over her. She felt blankets about her and a pillow under her head. Her shoes and stockings, her hat and her dress were gone, and she was in a strange room.

Getting accustomed to wallpaper and chairs and chromos was the first business, before her soul could begin to orient itself. Then she recalled everything and began to cry out:

"Elwood! Tell me about Elwood!"

"Hush, my dear!" was all Mrs. Bretherick would say. She said it very gently, but when Remember tried to leap from the bed, the old woman was very strong and held her down, coercing her with iron hands and a maddening reiteration of "Hush! Don't excite yourself. The Doctor says you must stay here. Hush now, my dear."

Remember's rebellion was checked by the sound of a loud nasal voice coming



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up from below. Some one downstairs was explaining something.

"You see it was thisaway, Doc'. I was standin' in front of Parlin's candy store right next the bank there, when I heard some fellers laughin'. Somebody hollered: 'Climb a lamp-post, everybody. Here comes Molly Seipp!' And I seen the big Seipp car comin' scootin' along. Molly said afterward she allowed to shift from second speed to neutral and put on the foot-brake. But she got rattled by the crowd round the bank, and slipped into high and stepped on the gas, and the car come boom-in' over the sidewalk and mowed right into the crowd. People jumped every which way and one or two got knocked down; but poor Elwood here, he was just comin' out the bank, and Molly was twistin' the steerin' wheel so crazy he didn't know which side to jump. And the car knocked him right through the big plate glass window, you know, and up against the steel bars just inside and—well, the bars was all bent, at that. Poor Elwood hadn't a chance.

"Molly climbed over the car and fell over on the sidewalk leavin' the wheels still goin' round. I stepped on the runnin' board and shut off the engine. Then I and some other fellers backed the car out, and whilst the others picked up Elwood and Molly, I seen the motor was still goin' good.

"So we put Elwood in the car, and we brought him over to you. Molly's all right except for hysterics, like, but Elwood—is they any hope for him? Nice boy, too—hard-workin', honest as the day. He had two bank-books in his hand, one of 'em the firm's, the other'n was his own little savin's-account. He always managed to save somethin' out of nothin'. He helt onto the book, Jim says, till he could hardly git it out of his hand. And it's all cut up with glass and covered with red so'st you couldn't hardly tell how much he had in the bank. Nice boy, too. He made a hard fight to live. Didn't holler at tall—just kept grittin' his teeth and mumblin' somethin'. You couldn't make out what he said, could you, Jim?"

Jim's answer was not audible.

Nor were Remember's protests audible.

SHE had been bred to expect little of life, to make no demands for luxury and to surrender with a cheerful Thy-will-be-done what the Lord took away with perfect right since He had given it. So now she made no fight, no outcry. She lay still, her head throbbing with the words of Laurence Hope in a song one of her girl friends sang:

Less than the dust beneath thy chariot wheel,
 Less than the rust that stains thy glorious sword—
 Less than the dust, less than the dust am I.

It was the Doctor who made the fight silently but bitterly, fiercely and in vain. The only noise was made by the Farnaby family when they arrived in a little mob. They came up the street, Mrs. Farnaby from her tub, her forearms covered with dried suds, her red hands snatching her apron hem to and

fro. She and the girls wailed aloud, and in the room below, Remember could hear the young brothers crying. But none of them wept so bitterly or so loudly as old Fall-down Farnaby, who came staggering up the steps and floundered about the room, freed by drunkenness of all restraints upon his remorse and his fear.

Remember was benumbed with her sorrow. It was a just punishment upon her, she was sure; and she spread her arms out as on a crucifix, thinking of herself as one of the thieves justly nailed to the tree next to that tree where the Innocent One suffered.

Doctor Bretherick had paused in his desperate battle to listen for sounds from the room above. He had gone to the stairs to ask his wife how Remember was. He had been glad of the prostration of her grief, but he was not deceived as to its sincerity.

REMEMBER was still calm when his business was done in the room below and he had turned the spoils of defeat over to his aide-de-camp, the undertaker. Doctor Bretherick entered the bedroom and sent his wife about her business while he dropped his exhausted body into a chair and spurred his exhausted mind to further effort.

He took one of Remember's cold hands in his and petted it and chafed it, shaking his head in wordless sympathy.

"At least he didn't suffer!" he lied.

Remember's woe, for lack of other expression, made use of the smiling muscles, as she said:

"That's not true. I heard."

"Well," the Doctor sighed, "his sufferings are over, anyway. He was a good boy, and you're a good brave girl. And now what are we to do for you?"

She had suffered more than she knew. There was after all an unsuspected mutiny in her soul, an unconscious insubordination to the All-wise, the All-good. But she spoke without excitement.

"There's only one thing for me. I can't live, of course. I was sorry I was so sick, and I was afraid of my cough; but now I see that God sent it to me as a blessing. Do you think it will carry me off soon?"

The Doctor shook his head. This frightened her. She gasped:

"Then it must be—I must do it myself. It's wicked, I suppose, but—"

He cowed her hysteria with a sharp rein:

"You've no right to your own life now. It belongs to your father and your mother—and to another life. Suicide would be worse than cowardice and selfishness in your case, my child. It would be murder."

He was cruelly kind to her, like a driver who flogs and stabs a sinking beast of burden out of the deep mire of death and up across the steep crags to the valley beyond.

Remember's very skin shivered and seemed to rise in welts under his goad. Her heart struggled back to its task. Fiercely as it ached, it beat with a fuller throb. Her soul brooded somberly, though:

"Well, if it's my duty to live, it's my duty to tell the truth. I'll tell it to

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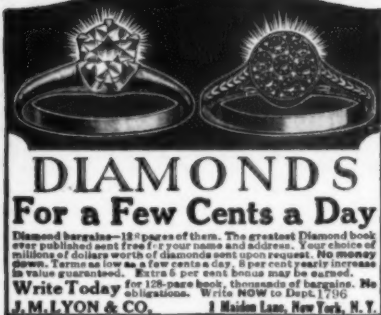
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everybody. Poor Elwood sha'n't go into his grave without people knowing how I loved him—"

Then he took up the whip again.

"No, honey, you've got to fight it out alone. It's pitiful, but you're going to be glad some day when you look back on it from happiness—"

"Happiness!" she groaned. The word was loathsome, despicable. The possibility of it belittled her grief.

The Doctor withdrew it. "I don't mean happiness, but some big high peak of goodness. Your life is going to be lifted up because of this, if you'll only meet it as you must."

"Tell me what to do. Don't make me think. I've got too much to think about that's dead and gone."

Then she sobbed and sobbed till her eyes were drained again of tears.

The Doctor was as weary as she—wearier, for he had her burden to carry as well as his own.

He sought a little respite; not for relief but for clear thinking. It was hard to think when a broken heart bled and leapt before his eyes.

"What you are to do is this: while I try to figure out the best plan for the future, you go on along home and tell your father and mother that you were here when Elwood was brought here. No, just go home with me, and I'll tell them. I'll tell them the shock has prostrated you, and that you mustn't be spoken to about it. You must be kept quiet, and when you cry, you must not be questioned, just let alone."

"Can't Mamma hold me in her arms?" the girl whimpered.

"Yes; and you can tell her the whole story if you want to."

"No, no! I can't! I won't! But I must have her arms around me. I must have arms around me to hold my heart together."

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTOR helped the little widowed mourner into his old buggy, and she kept her face uplifted clear of tears through the streets and along the walk at home.

She broke only when she heard the Doctor's voice telling what the father and mother who received them on the porch of their little house, had already heard from a passing gossip. They stared amazed when Remember darted up the stairs without speaking, and they heard her crying in her room.

The Doctor checked their pursuit and gave them his orders as if they were unruly children. When he had gone, the mother stole up to Remember's bedside and gathered her baby to her breast. It would have been almost sweet to weep there if only the truth could have been voiced.

By and by the old clergyman crept up the stairs and into the room and gave his clumsy sympathy. But when he spoke of God's will, and of the all-wise, all-loving Providence, Remember had to bite her tongue to keep it from blaspheming, or from the savage delight of confounding the preacher with truths he could never have suspected. He even

went so far as to plead that he had done wisely in keeping Remember from seeing Elwood oftener; otherwise she might have wanted to marry him.

This threw the girl into hysterics. She laughed so fiendishly that her mother drove her father from the room, and finally slipped away herself, knowing that solitude is the best medicine for that brief madness.

Alone with her soul, Remember grew afraid of herself. She knew that she could not keep the truth choked back in her rebellious heart forever.

All night long she coughed and wept, and knowing that the household kept anxious vigil, felt one more remorse added to her pack.

NEXT morning her father and her mother besought the Doctor to come to see her. But he answered:

"Send her to me."

When they told her, she realized that he was afraid to talk to her in her own home, and she found strength enough to rise from her bed and go to him.

She found the Doctor waiting for her. He had hardly slept all night. He had been reading trashy stories and thinking up trashier plots.

When Remember paused in his door until an onset of crying had passed, he almost smiled. She looked at him like a doomed animal and murmured as she dropped into a chair:

"Don't you suppose this cough will solve my problem, and put an end to me before—before—"

He shook his head, as he closed the door and went to his desk-chair: "Your cough will take a long time to cure or kill. But it may come in very handy. I've got it all thought out. You can't stay in this town now, I suppose. Let your cough carry you off to—say, Arizona, or California."

She was startled at this undreamed-of escape. He went on:

"I'll tell the necessary lies. That's a large part of my practice. And practice makes perfect. You will go to some strange town—and pose as a widow."

"You will marry an imaginary man out there and let him die quietly. Then, if you ever want to come home here, you can come back as Mrs. Somebody-or-other—"

This reminded her again that she had others to think of beside herself. Her dazed soul, still trying to creep round the deep well of death, busied itself with the fantastic make-believe of the Doctor. But she protested:

"How could I go any place and pretend to be a widow when Papa and Mamma would send all their letters to me as Miss Steddon?"

The Doctor was ready for her. He would order Remember to be sent to the Far West immediately and to live meagerly in the desert somewhere, because her father was poor, being a parson, and had loved her too unwisely well to teach her a means of earning a livelihood.

Once she was safely started, Remember was to write home that she had met on the train some old flame of earlier years, and—

Here his hostile audience interrupted



When Eyes Are Close *The Final Touch* Is Your Complexion at Ease



Does your complexion wince under the appraising gaze? Does it fear the verdict—"make-up"—"coarse"—"muddy"? Or is it a complexion of confidence—one that delights in close inspection? It is the latter if you use Carmen! For Carmen gives the beauty, the youthful bloom, the satiny smoothness that craves scrutiny, knowing that the more critical the gaze, the more pronounced the praise.

Carmen, the powder that *stays on*, is also Carmen the powder whose charming natural effect on the skin is never lessened under dampness or glaring light. It is truly the face powder extraordinary, as a test will show.

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Prettier teeth—safer teeth—in a week

We will send for the asking a new-method tooth paste. Modern authorities advise it. Leading dentists everywhere now urge its daily use.

To millions of people it has brought whiter, safer, cleaner teeth. It will bring them to you and yours. See and feel the delightful results and judge what they mean to you.

Removes the film

It removes the film—that viscous film you feel. No old method ever did that effectively.

Film clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays. It dims the teeth and leads to attacks on them. It is the cause of most tooth troubles. Those troubles have been constantly increasing, because old methods failed to combat film effectively.

These effects will delight you

Pepsodent removes the film. Then it leaves teeth highly polished, so film less easily adheres.

It also multiplies the salivary flow—Nature's great tooth-protecting agent. It multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva—the factor which digests starch deposits that cling. It multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva—the factor which neutralizes acids.

Every application brings these five effects. The film is combated, Nature's forces are

Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

Germs breed by millions in it. They, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea. Also of internal troubles.

Ways to combat it

Dental science has now found two effective film combatants. Able authorities have amply proved them. Now dentists the world over are urging their adoption.

These methods are combined in a dentifrice called Pepsodent—a tooth paste which meets every modern requirement. And a ten-day test is now supplied to everyone who asks.

multiplied. The benefits are quickly apparent.

Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear.

Compare the new way with the old, then decide for yourself which is best. Cut out the coupon now. This is too important to forget.

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A scientific film combatant, whose every application brings five desired effects. Approved by highest authorities, and now advised by leading dentists everywhere. All druggists supply the large tubes.

him. Life was slow in Calverly, and Remember could hardly imagine such a swift succession of events as Doctor Bretherick was so glibly planning for her. At any other time, to hear of going to California, or anywhere, would have been an epochal adventure. But Paradise was no longer within her rights. She had earned Sheol or some dire penance so well that it was ridiculous to propose romance, and romance in the Eden of palm trees and orange flowers. She revolted, too, from the pretense of having had another lover before Elwood:

"But I never had any 'flames'—"

The author was impatient at finding Pegasus held down to this tame hitching-post of life. He said:

"You've been away somewhere, haven't you?"

"Not much nor far," she sighed. "I was in Carthage once at Aunt Mabel's."

"That will do."

She sighed again as she shook her head. She was sadly glad to confess that no broken hearts had marked her path:

"Aunt Mabel was sick, and I had to nurse her. That's how I got to go. The only men I met brought in the groceries and the mail."

"But you've got to have another sweetheart, honey. Your folks don't know that you never met anybody in Carthage. So we'll make one up."

"But they'd ask Aunt Mabel, and she'd say there was no such man there."

"Then we'll make him a traveling man that you met— You went to church, didn't you?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, then, one day he occupied the pew with you and sang out of your book and walked home with you, and—er—um—you had forgotten all about him until he recalled himself to you on the train, and he was so respectful that you couldn't snub him. And by a strange coincidence he was getting off at wherever you're going to get off."

REMEMBER was breathing fast. The Doctor tortured her, and knew it. He regarded her with eyes of deep pity, but as so often before, he must operate and at once or all was lost. He had seen the seasons come and go in so many women whom he had ushered into the world and attended through all the procession of their functions and the perils of their functions.

Remember was at her apple-blossom time. She was frosted a little with grief, but still white and fragrant, frail and lovable, difficult to leave upon the bough. He saw the tremor on her lips, the little zephyrs of hopeless amorous yearning that lifted her bosom, the soft, lithe fingers that intertwined with one another for lack of stronger hands to clasp. He said:

"You've got to forget yourself and your sorrow and your truthfulness for the sake of your mother and father, because—"

"Just tell me what to do—not why, but what. You must save me and them. I want to die, but it would be too easy, too selfish, too cowardly. Give me something to live for, and I'll do my best. Only don't argue, don't argue!"

DID YOU EVER STUDY A LIFE SAVER



Here are some of the many points of excellence about it that you really should know:

1. Equal Quantity

Your 5c spent for LIFE SAVERS buys as much weight of candy as other brands offer—in spite of the hole.

3. Longer Lasting

LIFE SAVERS are compressed twice as hard as mints without the hole. They dissolve slowly and do not crumble.

2. Superior Quality

Purest flavors and a superior process have made LIFE SAVERS the standard mint candy—and always will.

4. Greater Surface

The hole gives more tongue surface and makes LIFE SAVERS feel pleasanter in the mouth.

5. The Hole

The hole is the guarantee of the genuine LIFE SAVERS —put there so that you can identify them.



Forcing and wheedling frantic children into taking nauseous medicines, or enduring racking agonies, was one of the everlasting chores of what a doctor calls practice.

"That's the way to talk," he said. "Take my prescriptions as I give them to you, and we'll save everybody from destruction. But if you want let me tell you why, you must ask no questions. I order you to go West and to find an imaginary husband there. His name shall be—let me see, what shall we call him? Wait a minute."

He reached back to an overcrowded revolving bookcase and took out the first volume his hands encountered. It was a history of medicine, and he was fond of it because it was also a history of the vanity of human science in its eternal war with death and of the bitter hostility that greeted every benefactor.

He rejected Galen, Harvey, Jenner and came finally upon the name of Doctor Woodville, who went to the defense of Jenner in the great war for vaccination and helped to make the hideous ravages of smallpox as rare now as they were common in his time. Bretherick liked this name of Woodville.

He had sent patients to Tucson,—which he pronounced "Tuckson,"—and also to Yuma, which had a wild and romantic sound. At each of these towns he planned that Remember should remain a week or two in her own name. In her letters home she was to say much of this Mr. Woodville and his devotion.

Then as Doctor Bretherick's excited mental spinnerets poured out the web, she was to write that Mr. Woodville was called farther West and could not bear to leave her, pleaded with her so earnestly to become his wife and go with him, that her heart had told her to accept him. She was to describe a hasty marriage and request that her letters thereafter be addressed to her as "Mrs. Woodville."

After a brief honeymoon, she could eliminate Dr. Woodville in some way to be decided at leisure. It would be risky, he said, to let Mr. Woodville live too long.

Remember had no experience of the dramatic limbo; but she began to play the critic, and point out the difficulties and the spots where the action would break down:

"Suppose I met somebody at Yuma or Tucson who knew me and wrote home. Suppose some accident kept me there. What if I fell ill and couldn't get away? And money—if I married Mr. Woodville, my father would stop sending me any, and then I'd starve to death—"

THE Doctor frowned. His fancy had carried him skippingly over the high spots of the landscape, and now she had tripped him and cast him headlong. But he would not give her up. He pointed out the attractive features of his scheme, the travel, the new landscapes, the new faces and souls, the glorious adventures, the possibility of meeting a real Mr. Woodville who would replace the home-made product.

While he tried to sell the merchandise of his fancy, Remember's own imagination was riotous. She was young, starved for life, for other horizons. Death and

disgrace were more untimely than her heart realized in its grief. The very perils of the enterprise made it a little interesting. But chiefly she found it acceptable because it was odious and difficult, and a sacrifice for others' sakes. And so at last she consented to play the part as best she could.

Remember rose to go. She was in haste to begin her career. But she gasped and sank into her chair with a deathly dread. Her first audience must be her father and mother, and she was paralyzed with stage-fright, sick, dizzy with confusion and the abrupt collapse of memory.

Doctor Bretherick put his arm about her, lifted her to his breast and upheld her like a tower of strength, quoting the words Walt Whitman used to the wounded soldier: "Lean on me! By God, I will not let you die."

CHAPTER VI

REMEMBER was not stirred by the Doctor's promises of happiness and life, but only by the persuasion that she would be really proving her love for her parents by deceiving them. Dr. Bretherick offered to take the brunt of her first clash with her desperate future.

"I'll go home with you again and fix it all up with your papa and mamma. They'll take it kind of hard, likely, losing you right away; and they'll worry over your health and your going away alone; but we've got to do the best we can for their sweet sakes. If you stayed here, you'd break your own heart and theirs and die in the bargain. My way saves your life and their pride. All they'll suffer will be losing the sight of you; but that's part of the job of being a parent.

"And part of the job of being a doctor is giving people a lot of pain to save them from a lot more, and searing them for their own good. So come along, honey."

As they set out upon the short ride to the clergyman's home, the Doctor felt as if he were advancing to a duel with an ancient adversary. He did not believe in Dr. Steddon's creeds. They were cruel legends, in his opinion.

He advanced to the contest, therefore, with a lust of conflict. He felt himself a kind of Sir Gawain with a lady on the pillion, riding into a dark forest to conquer the giant ogre who denied her her realm.

But when he reached the castle, he found it a humble cottage; the ogre was an undernourished old parson afraid of this world and the next, but most afraid of his beloved daughter's health. And at the ogre's side on the drawbridge the ogress was a frightened mother wringing wrinkled hands with terror.

Seeing Remember returning with the Doctor, they had come out on the porch in trembling anxiety. They were already so abased of hope, that when the Doctor told them that Remember would be all right if she could get away to California right away, they felt as if he had lifted them from the dust. He was not so much taking their ewe lamb from them as saving her to them.

They were fawningly grateful to him,

zealous for any sacrifice to benefit their child. The Doctor despised himself for a contemptible slanderer because of the mere thoughts that had passed through his mind on his way to the duel.

As for Remember, she was crucified with remorse. If her parents had only been harsh with her, or stingy with the money she would require, if they had only mentioned the difficulties or celebrated their sacrifice as a duty, she could have found some straw to cling to as she drowned in self-contempt. But their terror and their tenderness were all for her, and her love for them gushed like hot blood until it seemed an inconceivable treachery to conceal from them the truth.

It was well that Doctor Bretherick came with her and stood by to check her outcry, for her heart was fairly bursting with the centrifugal explosive power of a compressed secret.

Doctor Bretherick kept her under the ward of his stern eyes until he had frightened the parents just enough and reassured them just enough to make sure that they would let Remember go and go alone.

He gained a little acrid stimulant from Doctor Steddon's dread of letting his innocent daughter leave the shelter of her home and go out into the dangerous world. The Doctor knew too well from a doctor's long experience how far the beautiful ideal of the home is from the actual usual household. He knew too well that many a home keeps in more dreadful evils than it keeps out. But he could not say these things. He had a home of his own and a family of his own, and he revered the dream and the ideal.

AND so the continuity began to move. At first it followed the Doctor's manuscript with remarkable smoothness. Then Life, the ruthless Philistine manager, took a hand in it and twisted and turned it until its author would never have recognized it.

It carried the frightened waif of village disaster to cosmic heights unimaginable, to unheard-of experiences wherein this familiar experience of hers served as a schooling and an inspiration. Her degradation became her salvation; her practice of lies taught her eternal truth.

Her father, when he learned of this, wished that she had died in her cradle. But millions of people blessed her where she walked and smiled.

And by a miracle unequalled in the chronicle of any previous generation, she walked and smiled and carried balm and spikenard all about the world without wings yet with unwearied feet. She appeared in a hundred places at once by a diabolic telepathy in a multiplication that made of one shy frightened girl a shining multitude. And at times each of her was of an elfin fineness, at times of more than human size. But all of her was always of more than human sympathy, and spoke a language that men of every nation understood.

The next installment of this remarkable novel by America's Balzac develops a situation of tremendous power. Be sure to read this novel in the forthcoming issues of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE.



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As you know, Nature provides alkaline saliva to counteract the acids of fermentation in your mouth. A mild acid increases this saliva flow: as when you taste lemon.

Naturally, then, Listerine Tooth Paste—containing a small amount of a mild fruit acid—helps Nature keep your teeth sound.

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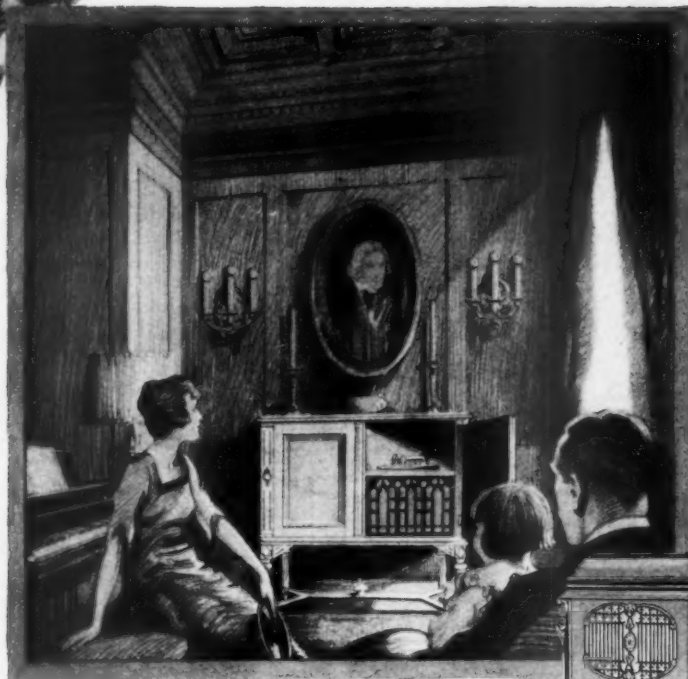
A very fine powder, calcium phosphate, is the cleanser. It leaves a fresh, clean, polished feeling about your teeth.

Thus Listerine Tooth Paste provides an easy, sure, and pleasant way to guard against tooth decay and pyorrhea. It is made by the makers of Listerine. You've known them for years.

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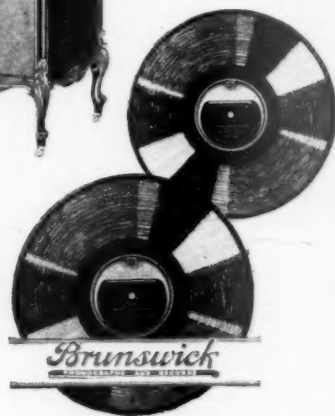
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